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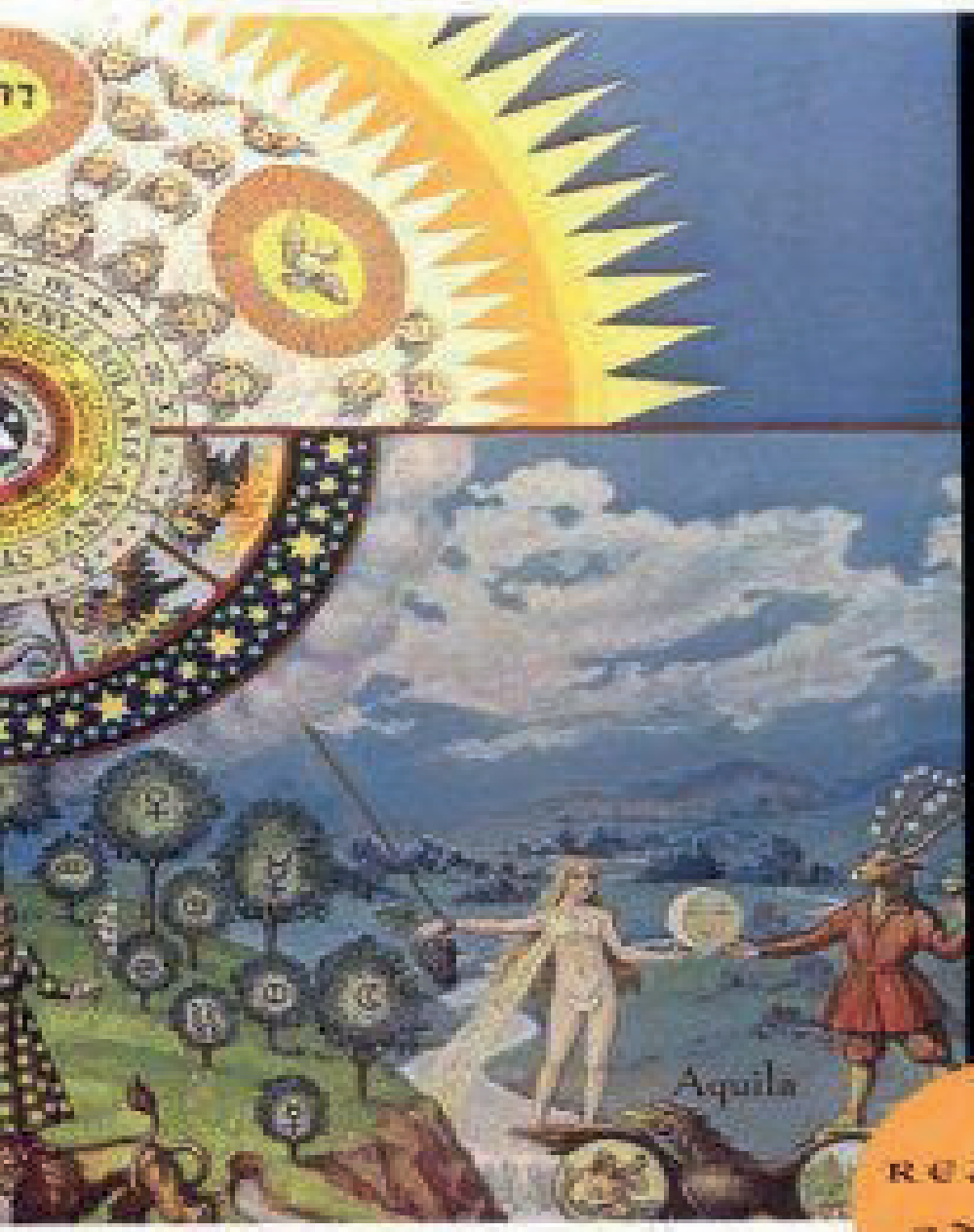
"A masterful summation of the esoteric teachings of the ages."
—Huston Smith, author of *The World's Religions*



The Secret Teachings of ALL AGES

READER'S EDITION

MANLY P. HALL

"Manly Hall's great work is a classic in the world's literature. It will guide historians, philosophers, and lay seekers of esoteric wisdom for centuries."
—Edgar Mitchell, Sc.D., Apollo Astronaut

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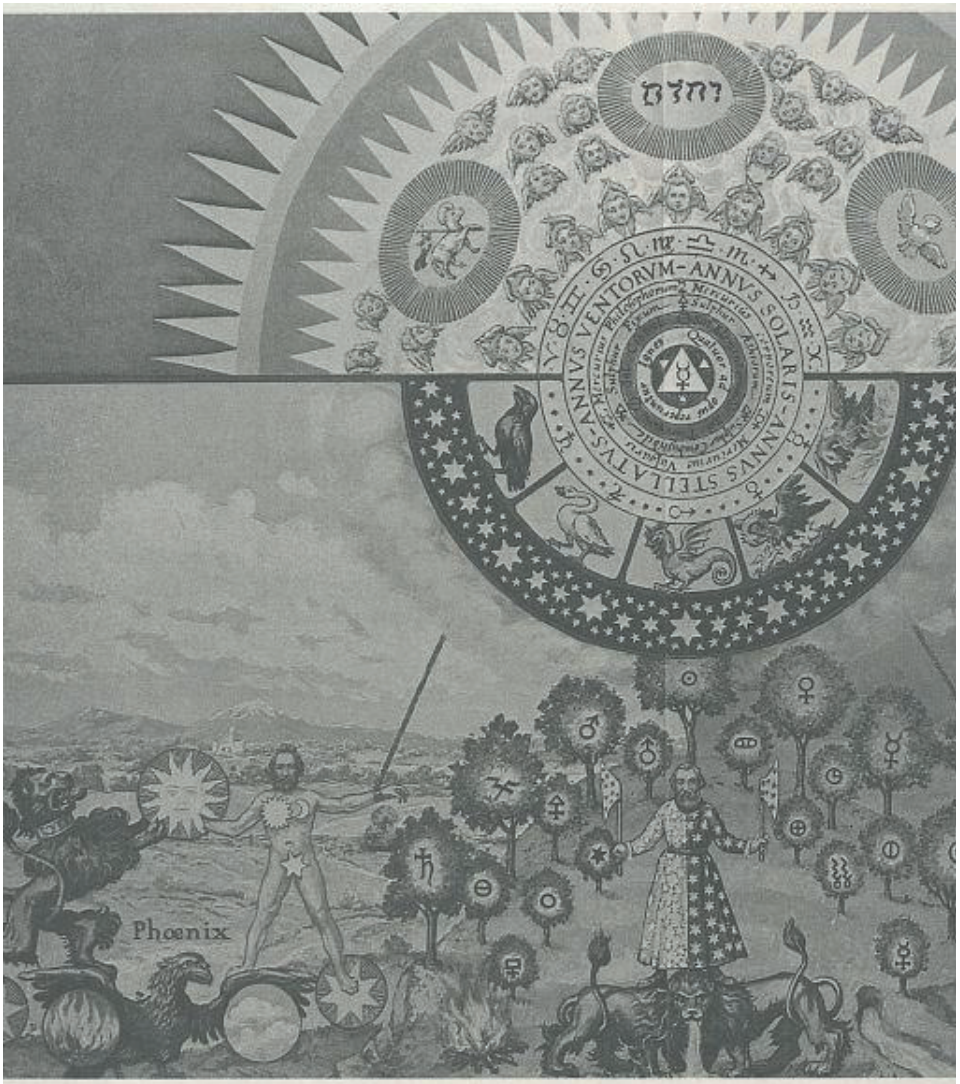

MANLY P. HALL

COLOR ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. AUGUSTUS KNAPP

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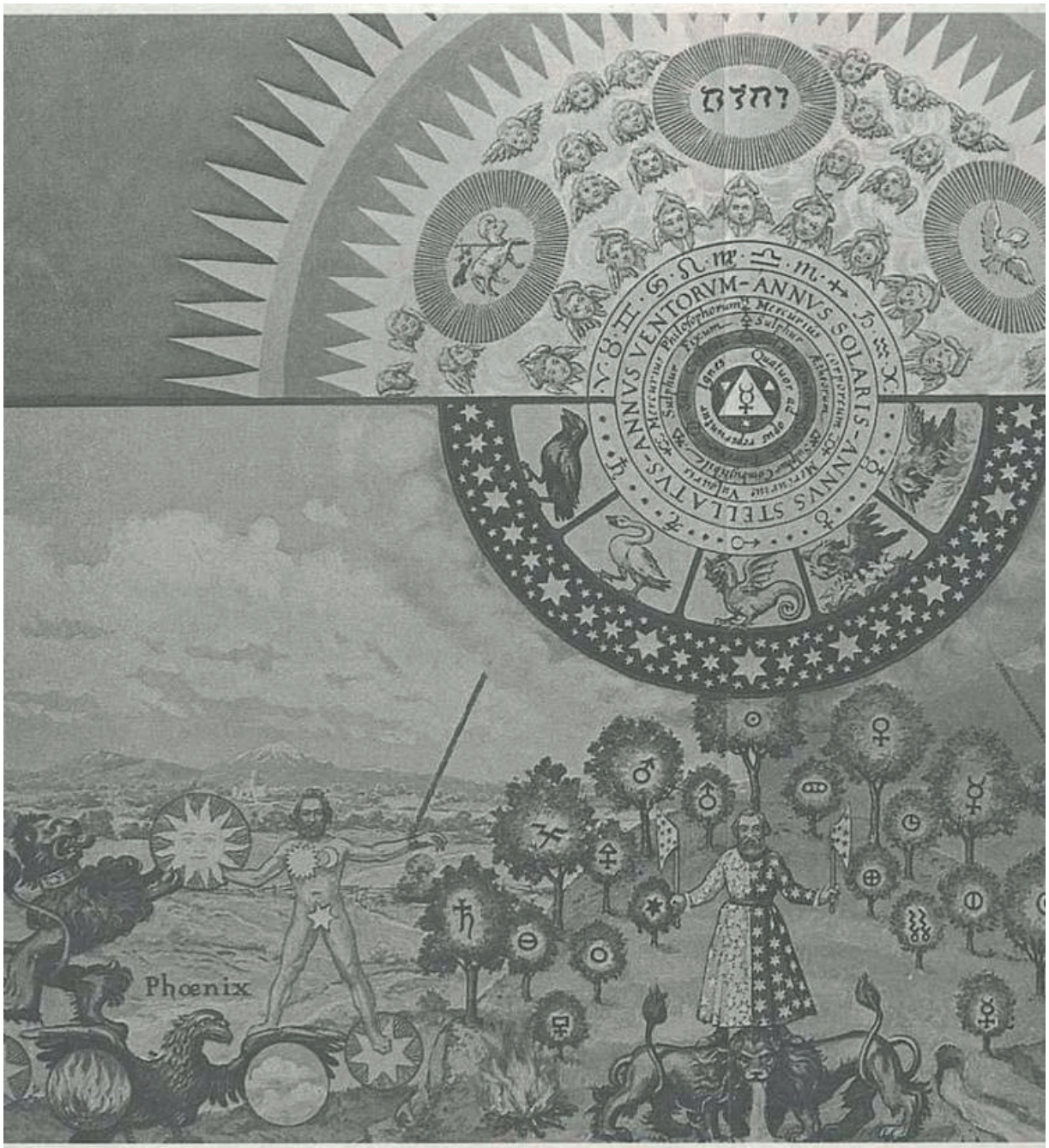

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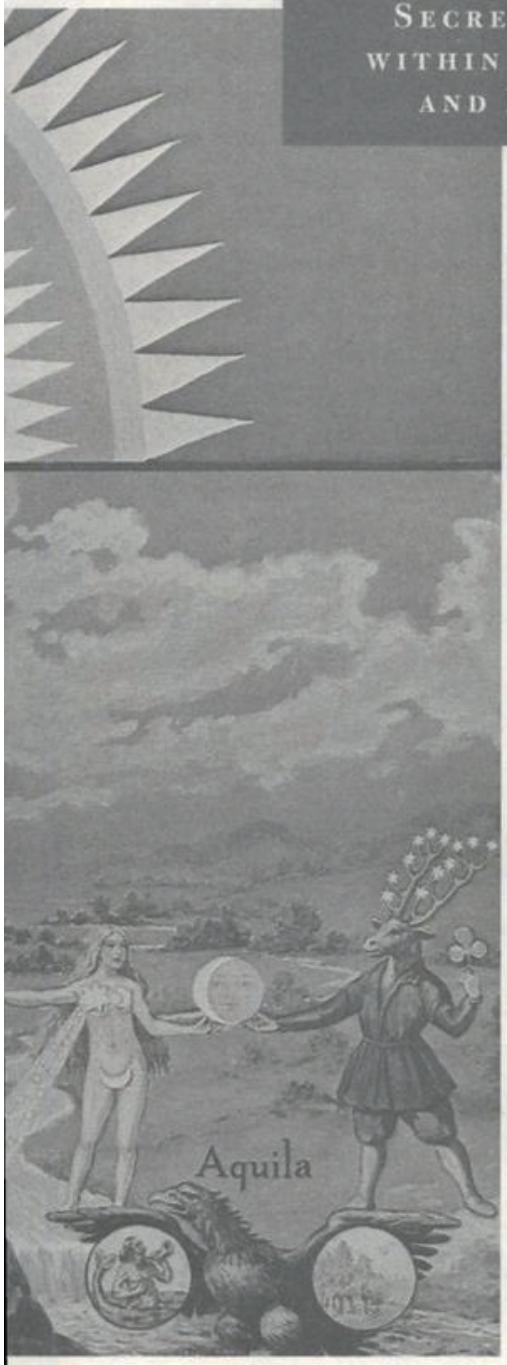
Being an Interpretation of the Secret Teachings Concealed within the Rituals, Allegories and Mysteries of the Ages

The Secret Teachings of All Ages

READER'S EDITION



An Encyclopedic Outline of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy

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This book is
dedicated to the
Rational Soul
of the World

Preface to the Reader's Edition

That you hold in your hands is a volume of the ages. Originally published in 1928 by the mystical scholar and sage Manly P. Hall (1901-1990), this book—like none before it and none that have followed—is a codex to the ideas and mysteries that resonate within the symbols, myths, and philosophies that have guided humankind since its earliest efforts at self-knowledge.

The Philosophical Research Society (www.prs.org) of Los Angeles has been the publisher of *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* since Mr. Hall founded the organization in 1934. Today, PRS continues to publish the original edition of the *Secret Teachings* and, through public lectures, research, publications, and the University of Philosophical Research, continues his legacy. With that legacy in mind, PRS has worked with Tarcher/Penguin to create this new "Reader's Edition" of Mr. Hall's classic work.

This edition brings a new level of accessibility to Mr. Hall's magisterial volume. The text is fully reset and the pages renumbered according to contemporary numerals, rather than the Roman numerals of the original edition. The original features fifty-four color plates by die artist J. Augustus Knapp and more than two hundred line drawings. This edition includes some of the finest of the color plates and approximately one hundred of the most pertinent line drawings.

Otherwise, the book is largely unaltered. It retains Mr. Hall's original index and—with the exception of small excisions for clarity and ease of use—features his complete unabridged text.

—OBADIAH S. HARRIS, PH.D.

President
Philosophical Research Society
April 1, 2003

Preface to the Diamond Jubilee Edition

On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of this volume, it seems fitting to reflect on the circumstances that led to its writing.

The original edition was planned and issued in the interval between the termination of World War I and the Great Depression of 1929. During this time I had a brief career on Wall Street, the outstanding event of which was witnessing a man depressed over investment losses take his life.

My fleeting contact with high finance resulted in serious doubts concerning business as it was being conducted at that time. It was apparent that materialism was in complete control of the economic structure, the final objective of which was for the individual to become part of a system providing an economic security at the expense of the human soul, mind, and body.

I felt strongly moved to explore the problems of humanity, its origin and destiny, and I spent a number of quiet hours in the New York Public Library tracing the confused course of civilization. With a very few exceptions modern authorities downgraded all systems of idealistic philosophy and the deeper aspects of comparative religion. Translations of classical authors could differ greatly, but in most cases the noblest thoughts were eliminated or denigrated. Those more sincere authors whose knowledge of ancient languages was profound were never included as required reading, and scholarship was based largely upon the acceptance of a sterile materialism.

Fortunately, since contemporary scholarship had little regard for the wisdom of the past, there was no premium on the earlier texts. As a result I assembled a fair collection of the works of those forgotten sages to whose labors the world owes a tremendous debt of gratitude. It seems that my efforts were timely, and the first two editions of the book were sold out before the volume came off the

press. There was certainly a blessing upon the book. Written by a young man in his twenties, it has now passed through a number of editions with over thirty printings and is still a best seller in its field.

We are now coming to the end of the twentieth century, and the great materialistic progress which we have venerated for so long is on the verge of bankruptcy. We can no longer believe that we are born into this world to accumulate wealth and abandon ourselves to mortal pleasures. We see the dangers and realize that we have been exploited for centuries. We were told that the twentieth century was the most progressive that the world has ever known, but unfortunately the progression was in the direction of self-destruction.

To avoid a future of war, crime, and bankruptcy, the individual must begin to plan his own destiny, and the best source of the necessary information comes down to us through the writings of the ancients. We have tried to select the most useful and practical elements of classical idealism, combining them into a single volume. The greatest knowledge of all time should be available to the twentieth century not only in the one shilling editions of the Bohn Library in small type and shabby binding, but in a book that would be a monument, not merely a coffin. John Henry Nash, who designed this book, agreed with me.

It is our sincere hope that this book will endure into the twenty-first century and continue to make available the contents of countless books and manuscripts that have been destroyed by the ravages of war. This volume is not devoted to my own opinions but is a tribute to the memories and labors of the noblest of mankind. May the twenty-first century bring with it a restoration of those systems of inspired instruction so desperately needed.

—MANLY P. HALL
Los Angeles, California
October 1, 1988

Foreword

It is an honor to have been invited to write this Foreword. My aim shall be to set forth briefly what a careful study of this important volume, over a period of years, has meant to me.

Associations of men and women bound together by oaths and obligations into esoteric fraternities have descended from the earliest times and bear witness to a natural inclination to perpetuate doctrines which lead to the good of mankind.

With the growth of social consciousness, these secret societies became the custodians of the highest cultural concepts. Their initiation rites were symbolic pageantries suitable to inspire veneration for the Divine Mysteries, and admiration for the powers of nature and of God. Most of the mythologies of classical nations were originally rituals of secret societies, and it is a mistake to assume that earlier cultures accepted as literal the elaborate theology and legendry found in their traditions.

Historically the secret societies were closely identified with state religions. Basic knowledge was believed to have been bestowed by the gods in a remote age. The esoteric philosophies have always been taught by means of secret organizations, to which candidates were admitted only after appropriate preparation and initiatory rites. These spiritual brotherhoods of scholars, sages, and mystics have flourished among all peoples, ancient and modern, and in all parts of the world.

In the program of the Mysteries each individual must grow into the comprehension of truth. Before he could be entrusted with the divine powers of mind and will, he must accept knowledge as a responsibility to his Creator and his world, rather than as an opportunity for the advancement of personal ambitions. The masters of the Mysteries taught secret practices and disciplines

by which the properly qualified disciples could develop the potent abilities latent within the soul, and so, come into conscious communication with spiritual realities.

Initiates of the philosophical societies came to be regarded as possessing extraordinary faculties and powers. They enjoyed the special favor of the divinities, performed miracles, and were worthy of the title “Twice-Born,” for they had come to second birth from the womb of the Mysteries. These adepts-philosophers were the truly evolved human beings. Most of the arts and sciences which enriched the modern world were discovered, developed, and in many instances perfected by these initiate philosophers and priests.

Scholarship was recognized as the pursuit most suitable to the abilities of man. But scholarship was always the means, never the end. The end of the sacred sciences was the abstraction of the human soul from bondage to the senses and its preparation to receive within itself the light of vast truths. Some men are naturally suited to higher learning for they possess integrity of motive, the patience of effort, and the vision of ends—these labored toward the soul’s improvement, and championed enlightened progress above other considerations. Those of different opinion opposed the Mystery Schools.

It was inevitable that the initiates of the Mysteries should unite themselves against the forces seeking their extinction. Thus, while the secret doctrine with its body of disciples functioned more or less openly in ancient society, it later passed almost completely from public view. This circumstance should not be interpreted as a decline of plan or purpose. The esoteric schools remained as a powerful force for the regeneration of human institutions.

Those who do not understand the spiritual sciences question their use of unusual symbols, myths, and figures employed to conceal the essential teaching. Let it be remembered that these “clouds” were no part of the original doctrine, but were made necessary by intolerance and bigotry. The use of indirect communication was based entirely upon practical considerations. To remain unknown was the best way to prevent a repetition of the disaster which occurred to the Knights Templars. The “veils” which concealed the arcana of the Mysteries were not employed to cover ignorance, but to protect wisdom, and in Europe it was protected for a thousand years.

The secrets of the Mysteries are obviously metaphysical, philosophical, and esoteric and relate to processes taking place within the fields of the human psyche during the practice of the spiritual disciplines. Discipleship ends in the

attainment of an inner capacity suitable for the realization of the esoteric tradition. The disciplines, by expanding consciousness, give the initiate practical mastery over that which is learned and constant awareness as to the proper use of higher learning.

If these sacred academies imparted only scientific, intellectual, ethical or cultural doctrines somewhat in advance of their time, they could produce only scholars. The initiates of the esoteric tradition were never regarded merely as brilliant intellectuals. From white-walled Memphis to rock-hewn Ellora, they were honored as practicing a higher dimension of essential knowledge. History preserves the records of numerous persons, living in different times and in various places, who have exhibited a knowledge and skill which cannot be explained according to present standards of erudition. We cannot ignore the testimonies of such learned men as Pythagoras, Buddha, and Plotinus. Many of the noblest members of our race have expressed their profound admiration for the esoteric institutions flourishing in their own times. Not to recognize the esoteric sciences is to disregard most that has contributed to the advancement and improvement of the human state during the last five thousand years. There being a divine order of learning superior to mundane knowledge, and its being available—the time is most appropriate for the further restoration of this sacred tradition.

Adeptship is the state of complete spiritual maturity so far as this is possible to a member of the human family. Deficient in nothing necessary to a life of wisdom, the adept is sufficient to his own needs and capable of determining that course of personal action most likely to contribute to enlightenment. The adepts foreshadow the state of mankind when it will have attained the full release of its faculties and its powers. The adept is, therefore, the truly evolved of our species. Accordingly, the adepts, considered together as the citizens of an invisible empire of the philosophic elect, constitute the heroic elder brothers, the custodians and protectors of humanity As the interpreters of the Mysteries, they are the true educators and illuminators. As the redeemed, the servants of Divine purpose, they comprise a powerful, creative and directive force in the world.

The science of life is, therefore, the supreme science, and the art of living, the finest of the arts. There have always been truth-seekers willing to acknowledge the sovereignty of the eternal over the temporal. These have dedicated themselves to the mastery of life, and have perpetuated from generation to generation the knowledge and skill they accumulated. This body of essential knowledge is the esoteric tradition. The institutions which perpetuated this

tradition are the Mystery Schools, and the graduates of these schools are the adepts.

This volume reveals that the lore and legendry of the world, the scriptures and sacred books, and the great philosophical systems all tell the same story. Human ambition may produce the tyrant; divine aspiration will produce the adept. This then, seems to me to be the significant message of Manly P. Hall's encyclopedic tome. So, my sincere wish is that this contribution by our friend may mean as much in your life as it has in mine.

—HENRY L. DRAKE
Vice President
Philosophical Research Society
1975

Preface

Numerous volumes have been written as commentaries upon the secret systems of philosophy existing in the ancient world, but the ageless truths of life, like many of the earth's greatest thinkers, have usually been clothed in shabby gar]ments. The present work is an attempt to supply a tome worthy of those seers and sages whose thoughts are the substance of its pages. To bring about this coalescence of Beauty and Truth has proved most costly, but I believe that the result will produce an effect upon the mind of the reader which will more than justify the expenditure.

Work upon the text of this volume was begun the first day of January, 1926, and has continued almost uninterruptedly for over two years. The greater part of the research work, however, was carried on prior to the writing of the manuscript. The collection of reference material was begun in 1921, and three years later the plans for the book took definite form. For the sake of clarity, all footnotes were eliminated, the various quotations and references to other authors being embodied in the text in their logical order. The bibliography is appended primarily to assist those interested in selecting for future study the most authoritative and important items dealing with philosophy and symbolism. To make readily accessible the abstruse information contained in the book, an elaborate topical cross index is included.

I make no claim for either the infallibility or the originality of any statement herein contained. I have studied the fragmentary writings of the ancients sufficiently to realize that dogmatic utterances concerning their tenets are worse than foolhardy. Traditionalism is the curse of modern philosophy, particularly that of the European schools. While many of the statements contained in this treatise may appear at first wildly fantastic, I have sincerely endeavored to refrain from haphazard metaphysical speculation, presenting the material as far

as possible in the spirit rather than the letter of the original authors. By assuming responsibility only for the mistakes which may appear herein, I hope to escape the accusation of plagiarism which has been directed against nearly every writer on the subject of mystical philosophy.

Having no particular *ism* of my own to promulgate, I have not attempted to twist the original writings to substantiate preconceived notions, nor have I distorted doctrines in any effort to reconcile the irreconcilable differences present in the various systems of religio-philosophic thought.

The entire theory of the book is diametrically opposed to the modern method of thinking, for it is concerned with subjects openly ridiculed by the sophists of the twentieth century. Its true purpose is to introduce the mind of the reader to a hypothesis of living wholly beyond the pale of materialistic theology, philosophy, or science. The mass of abstruse material between its covers is not susceptible to perfect organization, but so far as possible related topics have been grouped together.

Rich as the English language is in media of expression, it is curiously lacking in terms suitable to the conveyance of abstract philosophical premises. A certain intuitive grasp of the subtler meanings concealed within groups of inadequate words is necessary therefore to an understanding of the ancient Mystery Teachings.

Although the majority of the items in the bibliography are in my own library, I wish to acknowledge gratefully the assistance rendered by the Public Libraries of San Francisco and Los Angeles, the libraries of the Scottish Rite in San Francisco and Los Angeles, the libraries of the University of California in Berkeley and Los Angeles, the Mechanics' Library in San Francisco, and the Krotona Theosophical Library at Ojai, California. Special recognition for their help is also due to the following persons: Mrs. Max Heindel, Mrs. Alice Palmer Henderson, Mr. Ernest Dawson and staff, Mr. John Howell, Mr. Paul Elder, Mr. Phillip Watson Hackett, and Mr. John R. Ruckstell. Single books were lent by other persons and organizations, to whom thanks are also given.

The matter of translation was the greatest single task in the research work incident to the preparation of this volume. The necessary German translations, which required nearly three years, were generously undertaken by Mr. Alfred Beri, who declined all remuneration for his labor. The Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish translations were made by Prof. Homer P. Earle. The Hebrew text was edited by Rabbi Jacob M. Alkow. Miscellaneous short translations and checking

also were done by various individuals.

The editorial work was under the supervision of Dr. C. B. Rowlingson, through whose able efforts literary order was often brought out of literary chaos. Special recognition is also due the services rendered by Mr. Robert B. Tummonds, of the staff of H. S. Crocker Company, Inc., to whom were assigned the technical difficulties of fitting the text matter into its allotted space. For much of the literary charm of the work I am also indebted to Mr. M. M. Saxton, to whom the entire manuscript was first dictated and to whom was also entrusted the preparation of the index. The splendid efforts of Mr.J. Augustus Knapp, the illustrator, have resulted in a series of color plates which add materially to the beauty and completeness of the work.

The printing of the book was in the hands of Mr. Frederick E. Keast, of H. S. Crocker Company, Inc., whose great personal interest in the volume has been manifested by an untiring effort to improve the quality thereof. Through the gracious cooperation of Dr. John Henry Nash, the foremost designer of printing on the American Continent, the book appears in a unique and appropriate form, embodying the finest elements of the printer’s craft. An increase in the number of plates and also a finer quality of workmanship than was first contemplated have been made possible by Mr. C. E. Benson, of the Los Angeles Engraving Company, who entered heart and soul into the production of this volume.

The pre-publication sale of this book has been without known precedent. The subscription list for the first edition of 550 copies was closed a year before the manuscript was given to the printer. The second, or King Solomon, edition, 550 copies; the third, or Theosophical, edition, 200 copies; and the fourth, or Rosicrucian, edition, 100 copies, were sold before the finished volume was received from the printer. For so ambitious a production, this constitutes a unique achievement. The credit for this extraordinary sales program belongs to Mrs. Maud F. Galigher, who had as her ideal not to sell the book in the commercial sense of the word but to place it in the hands of those particularly interested in the subject matter it contains. Valuable assistance in this respect was also rendered by numerous friends who had attended my lectures and who without compensation undertook and successfully accomplished the distribution of the book.

In conclusion, the author wishes to acknowledge gratefully his indebtedness to each one of the hundreds of subscribers through whose advance payments the publication of this folio was made possible. To undertake the enormous expense involved was entirely beyond his individual means and those who invested in the

volume had no assurance of its production and no security other than their faith in the integrity of the writer.

I sincerely hope that each reader will profit from the perusal of this book, even as I have profited from the writing of it. The years of labor and thought expended upon it have meant much to me. The research work discovered to me many great truths; the writing of it discovered to me the laws of order and patience; the printing of it discovered to me new wonders of the arts and crafts; and the whole enterprise has discovered to me a multitude of friends whom otherwise I might never have known. And so, in the words ofJohn Bunyan:

I penned
It down, until at last it came to be,
For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.

—MANLY P. HALL
Los Angeles, California
May 28,1928

I

Introduction

Philosophy is the science of estimating values. The superiority of any state or substance over another is determined by philosophy. By assigning a position of primary importance to what remains when all that is secondary has been removed, philosophy thus becomes the true index of priority or emphasis in the realm of speculative thought. The mission of philosophy *a priori* is to establish the relation of manifested things to their invisible ultimate cause or nature.

"Philosophy," writes Sir William Hamilton, "has been defined [as]: The science of things divine and human, and of the causes in which they are contained [Cicero]; The science of effects by their causes [Hobbes]; The science of sufficient reasons [Leibnitz]; The science of things possible, inasmuch as they are possible [Wolf]; The science of things evidently deduced from first principles [Descartes]; The science of truths, sensible and abstract [de Condillac]; The application of reason to its legitimate objects [Tennemann]; The science of the relations of all knowledge to the necessary ends of human reason [Kant]; The science of the original form of the ego or mental self [Krug]; The science of sciences [Fichte]; The science of the absolute [von Schelling]; The science of the absolute indifference of the ideal and real [von Schelling]—or, The identity of identity and non-identity [Hegel]." (See *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*.) The six headings under which the disciplines of philosophy are commonly classified are: *metaphysics*, which deals with such abstract subjects as cosmology, theology, and the nature of being; logic, which deals with the laws

governing rational thinking, or, as it has been called, “the doctrine of fallacies”; ethics, which is the science of morality, individual responsibility, and character —concerned chiefly with an effort to determine the nature of good; *psychology,* which is devoted to investigation and classification of those forms of phenomena referable to a mental origin; *epistemology,* which is the science concerned primarily with the nature of knowledge itself and the question of whether it may exist in an absolute form; and *asthetics,* which is the science of the nature of and the reactions awakened by the beautiful, the harmonious, the elegant, and the noble.

FROM THOMASSIN'S *RECUEIL DES FIGURES, GROUPES, THERMES, FONTAINES, VASES ET AUTRES ORNEMENTS.*

PLATO.

Plato’s real name was Aristocles. When his father brought him to study with Socrates, the great Skeptic declared that on the previous night he had dreamed of a white swan, which was an omen that his new disciple was to become one of the world’s illumined. There is a tradition that the immortal Plato was sold as a slave by the King of Sicily.

Plato regarded philosophy as the greatest good ever imparted by Divinity to man. In the twentieth century, however, it has become a ponderous and complicated structure of arbitrary and irreconcilable notions—yet each substantiated by almost incon-testible logic. The lofty theorems of the old Academy which Iamblichus likened to the nectar and ambrosia of the gods have been so adulterated by opinion—which Heraclitus declared to be a falling sickness of the mind—that the heavenly mead would now be quite unrecognizable to this great Neo-Platonist. Convincing evidence of the increasing superficiality of modern scientific and philosophic thought is its persistent drift towards materialism. When the great astronomer Laplace was asked by Napoleon why he had not mentioned God in his *Traité de La Mécanique Céleste*, the mathematician naively replied: "Sire, I had no need for that hypothesis!"

In his treatise on *Atheism,* Sir Francis Bacon tersely summarizes the situation thus: "A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." *The Metaphysics* of Aristotle opens with these words: "All men naturally desire to know." To satisfy this common urge the unfolding human intellect has explored the extremities of imaginable space without and the extremities of imaginable self within, seeking to estimate the relationship between the one and the all; the effect and the cause; Nature and the groundwork of Nature; the mind and the source of the mind; the spirit and the substance of the spirit; the illusion and the reality.

An ancient philosopher once said: "He who has not even a knowledge of common things is a brute among men. He who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone is a man among brutes. But he who knows all that can be known by intellectual energy, is a God among men." Man's status in the natural world is determined, therefore, by the *quality* of his thinking. He whose mind is enslaved to his bestial instincts is philosophically not superior to the brute; he whose rational faculties ponder human affairs is a man; and he whose intellect is elevated to the consideration of divine realities is already a demigod, for his being partakes of the luminosity with which his reason has brought him into proximity. In his encomium of "the science of sciences" Cicero is led to exclaim: "O philosophy, life's guide! O searcher-out of virtue and expeller of vices! What could we and every age of men have been without thee? Thou hast produced cities; thou hast called men scattered about into the social enjoyment of life."

In this age the word *philosophy* has little meaning unless accompanied by some other qualifying term. The body of philosophy has been broken up into

numerous *isms* more or less antagonistic, which have become so concerned with the effort to disprove each other's fallacies that the sublimer issues of divine order and human destiny have suffered deplorable neglect. The ideal function of philosophy is to serve as the stabilizing influence in human thought. By virtue of its intrinsic nature it should prevent man from ever establishing unreasonable codes of life. Philosophers themselves, however, have frustrated the ends of philosophy by exceeding in their woolgathering those untrained minds whom they are supposed to lead in the straight and narrow path of rational thinking. To list and classify any but the more important of the now recognized schools of the philosophy is beyond the space limitations of this volume. The vast area of speculation covered by philosophy will be appreciated best after a brief consideration of a few of the outstanding systems of philosophic discipline which have swayed the world of thought during the last twenty-six centuries.

The Greek school of philosophy had its inception with the seven immortalized thinkers upon whom was first conferred the appellation of *Sophos,* "the wise." According to Diogenes Laertius, these were Thales, Solon, Chilon, Pitta-cus, Bias, Cleobulus, and Periander. Water was conceived by Thales to be the primal principle or element, upon which the earth floated like a ship, and earthquakes were the result of disturbances in this universal sea. Since Thales was an Ionian, the school perpetuating his tenets became known as the Ionic. He died in 546 B.C., and was succeeded by Anaximander, who in turn was followed by Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus, with whom the Ionic school ended. Anaximander, differing from his master Thales, declared measureless and indefinable infinity to be the principle from which all things were generated. Anaximenes asserted air to be the first element of the universe; that souls and even the Deity itself were composed of it.

Anaxagoras (whose doctrine savors of atomism) held God to be "an infinite self-moving mind; that this divine infinite Mind, not inclosed in any body, is the efficient cause of all things; out of the infinite matter consisting of similar parts, everything being made according to its species by the divine mind, who when all things were at first confusedly mingled together, came and reduced them to order." Archelaus declared the principle of all things to be twofold: mind (which was incorporeal) and air (which was corporeal), the rarefaction and condensation of the latter resulting in fire and water respectively. The stars were conceived by Archelaus to be burning iron plates. Heraclitus (who lived 536-470 B.C. and is sometimes included in the Ionic school) in his doctrine of change and eternal flux asserted fire to be the first element and also the state into which the world would ultimately be reabsorbed. The soul of the world he regarded as an

exhalation from its humid parts, and he declared the ebb and flow of the sea to be caused by the sun.

After Pythagoras of Samos, its founder, the *Italic* or *Pythagorean* school numbers among its most distinguished representatives Empedocles, Epicharmus, Archytas, Alcmæon, Hippasus, Philolaus, and Eudoxus. Pythagoras (580-500? B.C.) conceived mathematics to be the most sacred and exact of all the sciences, and demanded of all who came to him for study a familiarity with arithmetic, music, astronomy, and geometry. He laid special emphasis upon the *Philosophic life* as a prerequisite to wisdom. Pythagoras was one of the first teachers to establish a community wherein all the members were of mutual assistance to one another in the common attainment of the higher sciences. He also introduced the discipline of retrospection as essential to the development of the spiritual mind. Pythagoreanism may be summarized as a system of metaphysical speculation concerning the relationships between numbers and the causal agencies of existence. This school also first expounded the theory of celestial harmonics or "the music of the spheres." John Reuchlin said of Pythagoras that he taught nothing to his disciples before the discipline of silence, silence being the first rudiment of contemplation. In his *Sophist,* Aristotle credits Empedocles with the discovery of rhetoric. Both Pythagoras and Empedocles accepted the theory of transmigration, the latter saying: "A boy I was, then did a maid become; a plant, bird, fish, and in the vast sea swum." Archytas is credited with invention of the screw and the crane. Pleasure he declared to be a pestilence because it was opposed to the temperance of the mind; he considered a man without deceit to be as rare as a fish without bones.

The *Eleatic sect* was founded by Xenophanes (570-480 B.C.), who was conspicuous for his attacks upon the cosmologic and theogonic fables of Homer and Hesiod. Xenophanes declared that God was "one and incorporeal, in substance and figure round, in no way resembling man; that He is all sight and all hearing, but breathes not; that He is all things, the mind and wisdom, not generate but eternal, impassible, immutable, and rational." Xenophanes believed that all existing things were eternal, that the world was without beginning or end, and that everything which was generated was subject to corruption. He lived to great age and is said to have buried his sons with his own hands. Parmenides studied under Xenophanes, but never entirely subscribed to his doctrines. Parmenides declared the senses to be uncertain and reason the only criterion of truth. He first asserted the earth to be round and also divided its surface into zones of heat and cold.

Melissus, who is included in the Eleatic school, held many opinions in common with Parmenides. He declared the universe to be immovable because, occupying all space, there was no place to which it could be moved. He further rejected the theory of a vacuum in space. Zeno of Elea also maintained that a vacuum could not exist. Rejecting the theory of motion, he asserted that there was but one God, who was an eternal, ungenerated Being. Like Xenophanes, he conceived Deity to be spherical in shape. Leucippus held the Universe to consist of two parts: one full and the other a vacuum. From the Infinite a host of minute fragmentary bodies descended into the vacuum, where, through continual agitation, they organized themselves into spheres of substance.

The great Democritus to a certain degree enlarged upon the atomic theory of Leucippus. Democritus declared the principles of all things to be twofold: atoms and vacuum. Both, he asserted, are infinite—atoms in number, vacuum in magnitude. Thus all bodies must be composed of atoms or vacuum. Atoms possessed two properties, form and size, both characterized by infinite variety. The soul Democritus also conceived to be atomic in structure and subject to dissolution with the body. The mind he believed to be composed of spiritual atoms. Aristotle intimates that Democritus obtained his atomic theory from the Pythagorean doctrine of the *Monad.* Among the Eleatics are also included Protagoras and Anaxarchus.

Socrates (469-399 B.C.), the founder of the *Socratic* sect, being fundamentally a Skeptic, did not force his opinions upon others, but through the medium of questionings caused each man to give expression to his own philosophy. According to Plutarch, Socrates conceived every place as appropriate for teaching in that the whole world was a school of virtue. He held that the soul existed before the body and, prior to immersion therein, was endowed with all knowledge; that when the soul entered into the material form it became stupefied, but that by discourses upon sensible objects it was caused to reawaken and to recover its original knowledge. On these premises was based his attempt to stimulate the soul-power through irony and inductive reasoning. It has been said of Socrates that the sole subject of his philosophy was man. He himself declared philosophy to be the way of true happiness and its purpose twofold: (1) to contemplate God, and (2) to abstract the soul from corporeal sense.

The principles of all things he conceived to be three in number: *God, matter,* and *ideas.* Of God he said: “What He is I know not; what He is not I know.” Matter he defined as the subject of generation and corruption; idea, as an incorruptible substance—the intellect of God. Wisdom he considered the sum of

the virtues. Among the prominent members of the Socratic sect were Xenophon, Æschines, Crito, Simon, Glauco, Simmias, and Cebes. Professor Zeller, the great authority on ancient philosophies, has recently declared the writings of Xenophon relating to Socrates to be forgeries. When *The Clouds of Aristophanes*, a comedy written to ridicule the theories of Socrates, was first presented, the great Skeptic himself attended the play. During the performance, which caricatured him seated in a basket high in the air studying the sun, Socrates rose calmly in his seat, the better to enable the Athenian spectators to compare his own unprepossessing features with the grotesque mask worn by the actor impersonating him.

The *Elean* sect was founded by Phædo of Elis, a youth of noble family, who was bought from slavery at the instigation of Socrates and who became his devoted disciple. Plato so highly admired Phædo's mentality that he named one of the most famous of his discourses the *Phædo.* Phaedo was succeeded in his school by Plisthenes, who in turn was followed by Menedemus. Of the doctrines of the Elean sect little is known. Menedemus is presumed to have been inclined toward the teachings of Stilpo and the Megarian sect. When Menedemus' opinions were demanded, he answered that he was free, thus intimating that most men were enslaved to their opinions. Menedemus was apparently of a somewhat belligerent temperament and often returned from his lectures in a badly bruised condition. The most famous of his propositions is stated thus: That which is not the same is different from that with which it is not the same. This point being admitted, Menedemus continued: To benefit is not the same as good, therefore good does not benefit. After the time of Menedemus the Elean sect became known as the Eretrian. Its exponents denounced all negative propositions and all complex and abstruse theories, declaring that only affirmative and simple doctrines could be true.

The *Megarian* sect was founded by Euclid of Megara (not the celebrated mathematician), a great admirer of Socrates. The Athenians passed a law decreeing death to any citizen of Megara found in the city of Athens. Nothing daunted, Euclid donned woman's clothing and went at night to study with Socrates. After the cruel death of their teacher, the disciples of Socrates, fearing a similar fate, fled to Megara, where they were entertained with great honor by Euclid. The Megarian school accepted the Socratic doctrine that virtue is wisdom, adding to it the Eleatic concept that goodness is absolute unity and all change an illusion of the senses. Euclid maintained that good has no opposite and therefore evil does not exist. Being asked about the nature of the gods, he declared himself ignorant of their disposition save that they hated curious

persons.

The Megarians are occasionally included among the dialectic philosophers. Euclid (who died in 374? B.C.) was succeeded in his school by Eubulides, among whose disciples were Alexinus and Apollonius Cronus. Euphantus, who lived to great age and wrote many tragedies, was among the foremost followers of Eubulides. Diodorus is usually included in the Megarian school, having heard Eubulides lecture. According to legend, Diodorus died of grief because he could not answer instantly certain questions asked him by Stilpo, at one time master of the Megarian school. Diodorus held that nothing can be moved, since to be moved it must be taken out of the place in which it is and put into the place where it is not, which is impossible because all things must always be in the places where they are.

The *Cynics* were a sect founded by Antisthenes of Athens (444-365? B.C.), a disciple of Socrates. Their doctrine may be described as an extreme individualism which considers man as existing for himself alone and advocates surrounding him by inharmony, suffering, and direst need that he may thereby be driven to retire more completely into his own nature. The Cynics renounced all worldly possessions, living in the rudest shelters and subsisting upon the coarsest and simplest food. On the assumption that the gods wanted nothing, the Cynics affirmed that those whose needs were fewest consequently approached closest to the divinities. Being asked what he gained by a life of philosophy, Antisthenes replied that he had learned how to converse with himself.

Diogenes of Sinopis is remembered chiefly for the tub in the Metroum which for many years served him as a home. The people of Athens loved the beggar-philosopher, and when a youth in jest bored holes in the tub, the city presented Diogenes with a new one and punished the youth. Diogenes believed that nothing in life can be rightly accomplished without exercitation. He maintained that everything in the world belongs to the wise, a declaration which he proved by the following logic: “All things belong to the gods; the gods are friends to wise persons; all things are common amongst friends; therefore all things belong to the wise.” Among the Cynics are Monimus, Onesicritus, Crates, Metrocles, Hipparchia (who married Crates), Menippus, and Menedemus.

The *Cyrenaic* sect, founded by Aristippus of Cyrene (435-356? B.C.), promulgated the doctrine of hedonism. Learning of the fame of Socrates, Aristippus journeyed to Athens and applied himself to the teachings of the great Skeptic. Socrates, pained by the voluptuous and mercenary tendencies of Aristippus, vainly labored to reform the young man. Aristippus has the

distinction of being consistent in principle and practice, for he lived in perfect harmony with his philosophy that the quest of pleasure was the chief purpose of life. The doctrines of the Cyrenaics may be summarized thus: All that is actually known concerning any object or condition is the feeling which it awakens in man's own nature. In the sphere of ethics that which awakens the most pleasant feeling is consequently to be esteemed as the greatest good. Emotional reactions are classified as pleasant or gentle, harsh, and mean. The end of pleasant emotion is pleasure; the end of harsh emotion, grief; the end of mean emotion, nothing.

Through mental perversity some men do not desire pleasure. In reality, however, pleasure (especially of a physical nature) is the true end of existence and exceeds in every way mental and spiritual enjoyments. Pleasure, furthermore, is limited wholly to the moment; *now* is the only time. The past cannot be regarded without regret and the future cannot be faced without misgiving; therefore neither is conducive to pleasure. No man should grieve, for grief is the most serious of all diseases. Nature permits man to do anything he desires; he is limited only by his own laws and customs. A philosopher is one free from envy, love, and superstition, and whose days are one long round of pleasure. Indulgence was thus elevated by Aristippus to the chief position among the virtues. He further declared philosophers to differ markedly from other men in that they alone would not change the order of their lives if all the laws of men were abolished. Among prominent philosophers influenced by the Cyrenaic doctrines were Hegesias, Anniceris, Theodorus, and Bion.

The sect of the *Academic* philosophers instituted by Plato (427-347 B.C.) was divided into three major parts—the old, the middle, and the new Academy. Among the old Academics were Speusippus, Zenocrates, Poleman, Crates, and Crantor. Arcesilaus instituted the middle Academy and Carneades founded the new. Chief among the masters of Plato was Socrates. Plato traveled widely and was initiated by the Egyptians into the profundities of Hermetic philosophy. He also derived much from the doctrines of the Pythagoreans. Cicero describes the threefold constitution of Platonic philosophy as comprising ethics, physics, and dialectics. Plato defined *good* as threefold in character: good in the soul, expressed through the virtues; good in the body, expressed through the symmetry and endurance of the parts; and good in the external world, expressed through social position and companionship. In *The Book of Speusippus on Platonic Definitions,* that great Platonist thus defines God: "A being that lives immortally by means of Himself alone, sufficing for His own blessedness, the eternal Essence, cause of His own goodness." According to Plato, the *One* is the term

most suitable for defining the Absolute, since the whole precedes the parts and diversity is dependent on unity, but unity not on diversity. The One, moreover, is before being, for *to be* is an attribute or condition of the One.

Platonic philosophy is based upon the postulation of three orders of being: that which moves unmoved, that which is self-moved, and that which is moved. That which is immovable but moves is anterior to that which is self-moved, which likewise is anterior to that which it moves. That in which motion is inherent cannot be separated from its motive power; it is therefore incapable of dissolution. Of such nature are the immortals. That which has motion imparted to it from another can be separated from the source of its animating principle; it is therefore subject to dissolution. Of such nature are mortal beings. Superior to both the mortals and the immortals is that condition which continually moves yet itself is unmoved. To this constitution the power of abidance is inherent; it is therefore the Divine Permanence upon which all things are established. Being nobler even than self-motion, the unmoved Mover is the first of all dignities. The Platonic discipline was founded upon the theory that learning is really reminiscence, or the bringing into objectivity of knowledge formerly acquired by the soul in a previous state of existence. At the entrance of the Platonic school in the Academy were written the words: “Let none ignorant of geometry enter here.”

After the death of Plato, his disciples separated into two groups. One, the *Academics,* continued to meet in the Academy where once he had presided; the other, the *Peripatetics,* removed to the Lyceum under the leadership of Aristotle (384-322 B.C.). Plato recognized Aristotle as his greatest disciple and, according to Philoponus, referred to him as “the mind of the school.” If Aristotle were absent from the lectures, Plato would say: “The intellect is not here.” Of the prodigious genius of Aristotle, Thomas Taylor writes in his introduction to *The Metaphysics:*

“When we consider that he was not only well acquainted with every science, as his works abundantly evince, but that he wrote on almost every subject which is comprehended in the circle of human knowledge, and this with matchless accuracy and skill, we know not which to admire most, the penetration or extent of his mind.” Of the philosophy of Aristotle, the same author says: “The end of Aristotle’s moral philosophy is perfection through the virtues, and the end of his contemplative philosophy an union with the one principle of all things.”

Aristotle conceived philosophy to be twofold: practical and theoretical. Practical philosophy embraced ethics and politics; theoretical philosophy,

physics and logic. Metaphysics he considered to be the science concerning that substance which has the principle of motion and rest inherent to itself. To Aristotle the soul is that by which man first lives, feels, and understands. Hence to the soul he assigned three faculties: nutritive, sensitive, and intellective. He further considered the soul to be twofold—rational and irrational—and in some particulars elevated the sense perceptions above the mind. Aristotle defined wisdom as the science of first Causes. The four major divisions of his philosophy are dialectics, physics, ethics, and metaphysics. God is defined as the First Mover, the Best of beings, an immovable Substance, separate from sensible things, void of corporeal quantity, without parts and indivisible. Platonism is based upon *a Priori* reasoning; Aristotelianism upon *a posteriori* reasoning. Aristotle taught his pupil, Alexander the Great, to feel that if he had not done a good deed he had not reigned that day. Among his followers were Theophrastus, Strato, Lyco, Aristo, Critolaus, and Diodorus.

Of *Skepticism* as propounded by Pyrrho of Elis (365-275 B.C.) and by Timon, Sextus Empiricus said that those who seek must find or deny they have found or can find, or persevere in the inquiry. Those who suppose they have found truth are called *Dogmatists;* those who think it incomprehensible are the *Academics;* those who still seek are the *Skeptics.* The attitude of Skepticism towards the knowable is summed up by Sextus Empiricus in the following words: “But the chief ground of Skepticism is that to every reason there is an opposite reason equivalent, which makes us forbear to dogmatize.” The Skeptics were strongly opposed to the Dogmatists and were agnostic in that they held the accepted theories regarding Deity to be self-contradictory and undemonstrable. “How,” asked the Skeptic, “can we have indubitate knowledge of God, knowing not His substance, form or place; for, while philosophers disagree irreconcilably on these points, their conclusions cannot be considered as un-doubtably true?” Since absolute knowledge was considered unattainable, the Skeptics declared the end of their discipline to be: “In opinionatives, indisturbance; in impulsives, moderation; and in disquietives, suspension.”

The sect of the *Stoics* was founded by Zeno (340-265 B.C.), the Cittiean, who studied under Crates the Cynic, from which sect the Stoics had their origin. Zeno was succeeded by Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Zeno of Tanis, Diogenes, Antipater, Panætius, and Posidonius. Most famous of the Roman Stoics are Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. The Stoics were essentially pantheists, since they maintained that as there is nothing better than the world, the world is God. Zeno declared that the reason of the world is diffused throughout it as seed. Stoicism is a materialistic philosophy, enjoining voluntary resignation to natural law.

Chrysippus maintained that good and evil being contrary, both are necessary since each sustains the other. The soul was regarded as a body distributed throughout the physical form and subject to dissolution with it. Though some of the Stoics held that wisdom prolonged the existence of the soul, actual immortality is not included in their tenets. The soul was said to be composed of eight parts: the five senses, the generative power, the vocal power, and an eighth, or hegemonic, part. Nature was defined as God mixed throughout the substance of the world. All things were looked upon as bodies either corporeal or incorporeal.

Meekness marked the attitude of the Stoic philosopher. While Diogenes was delivering a discourse against anger, one of his listeners spat contemptuously in his face. Receiving the insult with humility, the great Stoic was moved to retort: “I am not angry, but am in doubt whether I ought to be so or not!”

Epicurus of Samos (341-270 B.C.) was the founder of the Epicurean sect, which in many respects resembles the Cyrenaic but is higher in ethical standards. The Epicureans also posited pleasure as the most desirable state, but conceived it to be a grave and dignified state achieved through renunciation of those mental and emotional inconstancies which are productive of pain and sorrow. Epicurus held that as the pains of the mind and soul are more grievous than those of the body, so the joys of the mind and soul exceed those of the body. The Cyrenaics asserted pleasure to be dependent upon action or motion; the Epicureans claimed rest or lack of action to be equally productive of pleasure. Epicurus accepted the philosophy of Democritus concerning the nature of atoms and based his physics upon this theory. The Epicurean philosophy may be summed up in four canons: “(1) Sense is never deceived; and therefore every sensation and every perception of an appearance is true. (2) Opinion follows upon sense and is super-added to sensation, and capable of truth or falsehood. (3) All opinion arrested, or not contradicted by the evidence of sense, is true. (4) An opinion contradicted, or not arrested by the evidence of sense, is false.” Among the Epicureans of note were Metrodorus of Lampsacus, Zeno of Sidon, and Phaedrus.

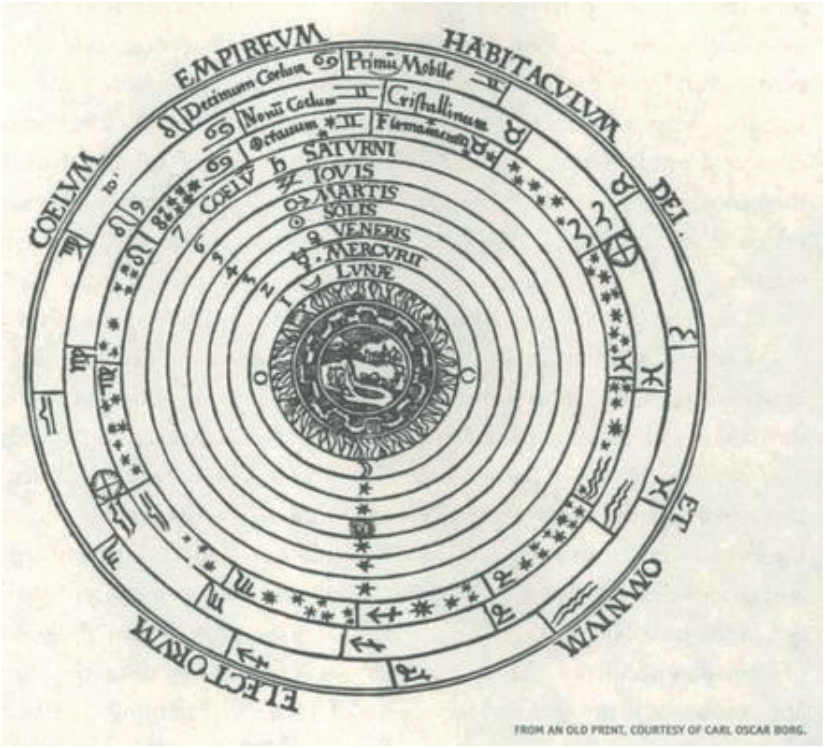
Eclecticism may be defined as the practice of choosing apparently irreconcilable doctrines from antagonistic schools and constructing therefrom a composite philosophic system in harmony with the convictions of the eclectic himself. Eclecticism can scarcely be considered philosophically or logically sound, for as individual schools arrive at their conclusions by different methods of reasoning, so the philosophic product of fragments from these schools must necessarily be built upon the foundation of conflicting premises. Eclecticism,

accordingly, has been designated the layman's cult. In the Roman Empire little thought was devoted to philosophic theory; consequently most of its thinkers were of the eclectic type. Cicero is the outstanding example of early Eclecticism, for his writings are a veritable potpourri of invaluable fragments from earlier schools of thought. Eclecticism appears to have had its inception at the moment when men first doubted the possibility of discovering ultimate truth. Observing all so-called knowledge to be mere opinion at best, the less studious furthermore concluded that the wiser course to pursue was to accept that which appeared to be the most reasonable of the teachings of any school or individual. From this practice, however, arose a pseudo-broadmindedness devoid of the element of preciseness found in true logic and philosophy.

The *Neo-Pythagorean* school flourished in Alexandria during the first century of the Christian Era. Only two names stand out in connection with It—Apollonius of Tyana and Moderatus of Gades. Neo-Pythagoreanism is a link between the older pagan philosophies and Neo-Platonism. Like the former, it contained many exact elements of thought derived from Pythagoras and Plato; like the latter, it emphasized metaphysical speculation and ascetic habits. A striking similarity has been observed by several authors between Neo-Pythagoreanism and the doctrines of the Essenes. Special emphasis was laid upon the mystery of numbers, and it is possible that the Neo-Pythagoreans had a far wider knowledge of the true teachings of Pythagoras than is available today. Even in the first century Pythagoras was regarded more as a god than a man, and the revival of his philosophy was resorted to apparently in the hope that his name would stimulate interest in the deeper systems of learning. But Greek philosophy had passed the zenith of its splendor; the mass of humanity was awakening to the importance of physical life and physical phenomena. The emphasis upon earthly affairs which began to assert itself later reached maturity of expression in twentieth century materialism and commercialism, even though Neo-Platonism was to intervene and many centuries pass before this emphasis took definite form.

Although Ammonius Saccus was long believed to be the founder of *Neo-Platonism,* the school had its true beginning in Plotinus (A.D. 204-269?). Prominent among the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria, Syria, Rome, and Athens were Porphyry, Iamblichus, Sallustius, the Emperor Julian, Plutarch, and Proclus. Neo-Platonism was the supreme effort of decadent pagandom to publish and thus preserve for posterity its secret (or unwritten) doctrine. In its teachings ancient idealism found its most perfect expression. Neo-Platonism was concerned almost exclusively with the problems of higher metaphysics. It

recognized the existence of a secret and all-important doctrine which from the time of the earliest civilizations had been concealed within the rituals, symbols, and allegories of religions and philosophies. To the mind unacquainted with its fundamental tenets, Neo-Platonism may appear to be a mass of speculations interspersed with extravagant flights of fancy. Such a viewpoint, however, ignores the institutions of the Mysteries—those secret schools into whose profundities of idealism nearly all of the first philosophers of antiquity were initiated.



THE PTOLEMAIC SCHEME OF THE UNIVERSE.

In ridiculing the geocentric system of astronomy expounded by Claudius Ptolemy, modern astronomers have overlooked the philosophic key to the Ptolemaic system. The universe of Ptolemy is a diagrammatic representation of the relationships existing between the various divine and elemental parts of every creature, and is not concerned with astronomy as that science is now comprehended. In the above figure, special attention is called to the three circles of zodiacs surrounding the orbits of the planets. These zodiacs represent the threefold spiritual constitution of the universe. The orbits of the planets are the Governors of the World and the four elemental spheres in the center represent

the physical constitution of both man and the universe. Ptolemy's scheme of the universe is simply a cross section of the universal aura, the planets and elements to which he refers having no relation to those recognized by modern astronomers.

When the physical body of pagan thought collapsed, an attempt was made to resurrect the form by instilling new life into it by the unveiling of its mystical truths. This effort apparently was barren of results. Despite the antagonism, however, between pristine Christianity and Neo-Platonism many basic tenets of the latter were accepted by the former and woven into the fabric of Patristic philosophy. Briefly described, Neo-Platonism is a philosophic code which conceives every physical or concrete body of doctrine to be merely the shell of a spiritual verity which may be discovered through meditation and certain exercises of a mystic nature. In comparison to the esoteric spiritual truths which they contain, the corporeal bodies of religion and philosophy were considered relatively of little value. Likewise, no emphasis was placed upon the material sciences.

The term *Patristic* is employed to designate the philosophy of the Fathers of the early Christian Church. Patristic philosophy is divided into two general epochs: ante-Nicene and post-Nicene. The ante-Nicene period in the main was devoted to attacks upon paganism and to apologies and defenses of Christianity. The entire structure of pagan philosophy was assailed and the dictates of faith elevated above those of reason. In some instances efforts were made to reconcile the evident truths of paganism with Christian revelation. Eminent among the ante-Nicene Fathers were St. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Justin Martyr. In the post-Nicene period more emphasis was placed upon the unfoldment of Christian philosophy along Platonic and Neo-Platonic lines, resulting in the appearance of many strange documents of a lengthy, rambling, and ambiguous nature, nearly all of which were philosophically unsound. The post-Nicene philosophers included Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Cyril of Alexandria. The Patristic school is notable for its emphasis upon the supremacy of man throughout the universe. Man was conceived to be a separate and divine creation —the crowning achievement of Deity and an exception to the suzerainty of natural law. To the Patristics it was inconceivable that there should ever exist another creature so noble, so fortunate, or so able as man, for whose sole benefit and edification all the kingdoms of Nature were primarily created.

Patristic philosophy cluminated in *Augustinianism,* which may best be defined

as Christian Platonism. Opposing the *Pelasgian* doctrine that man is the author of his own salvation, Augustinianism elevated the church and its dogmas to a position of absolute infallibility—a position which it successfully maintained until the Reformation. *Gnosticism,* a system of emanationism, interpreting Christianity in terms of Greek, Egyptian, and Persian metaphysics, appeared in the latter part of the first century of the Christian Era. Practically all the information extant regarding the Gnostics and their doctrines, stigmatized as heresy by the ante-Nicene Church Fathers, is derived from the accusations made against them, particularly from the writings of St. Irenæus. In the third century appeared *Manichæism,* a dualistic system of Persian origin, which taught that Good and Evil were forever contending for universal supremacy. In Manichaeism, Christ is conceived to be the Principle of redeeming Good in contradistinction to the man Jesus, who was viewed as an evil personality.

The death of Boethius in the sixth century marked the close of the ancient Greek school of philosophy. The ninth century saw the rise of the new school of *Scholasticism,* which sought to reconcile philosophy with theology. Representative of the main divisions of the Scholastic school were the *Eclecticism* of John of Salisbury, the *Mysticism* of Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Bonaventura, the *Rationalism* of Peter Abelard, and the pantheistic *Mysticism* of Meister Eck-hart. Among the Arabian Aristotelians were Avicenna and Averroes. The zenith of Scholasticism was reached with the advent of Albertus Magnus and his illustrious disciple, St. Thomas Aquinas. *Thomism* (the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, sometimes referred to as the Christian Aristotle) sought to reconcile the various factions of the Scholastic school. Thomism was basically Aristotelian with the added concept that faith is a projection of reason.

Scotism, or the doctrine of *Voluntarism* promulgated by Joannes Duns Scotus, a Franciscan Scholastic, emphasized the power and efficacy of the individual will, as opposed to Thomism. The outstanding characteristic of Scholasticism was its frantic effort to cast all European thought in an Aristotelian mold. Eventually the Schoolmen descended to the level of mere word-mongers who picked the words of Aristotle so clean that nothing but the bones remained. It was this decadent school of meaningless verbiage against which Sir Francis Bacon directed his bitter shafts of irony and which he relegated to the potter’s field of discarded notions.

The Baconian, or inductive, system of reasoning (whereby facts are arrived at by a process of observation and verified by experimentation) cleared the way for

the schools of modern science. Bacon was followed by Thomas Hobbes (for some time his secretary), who held mathematics to be the only exact science and thought to be essentially a mathematical process. Hobbes declared matter to be the only reality, and scientific investigation to be limited to the study of bodies, the phenomena relative to their probable causes, and the consequences which flow from them under every variety of circumstance. Hobbes laid special stress upon the significance of words, declaring understanding to be the faculty of perceiving the relationship between words and the objects for which they stand.

Having broken away from the scholastic and theological schools, *Post-Reformation,* or modern, philosophy experienced a most prolific growth along many diverse lines. According to *Humanism,* man is the measure of all things; Rationalism makes the reasoning faculties the basis of all knowledge; *Political Philosophy* holds that man must comprehend his natural, social, and national privileges; *Empiricism* declares that alone to be true which is demonstrable by experiment or experience; *Moralism* emphasizes the necessity of right conduct as a fundamental philosophic tenet; *Idealism* asserts the realities of the universe to be superphysical—either mental or psychical; Realism, the reverse; and *Phenomenalism* restricts knowledge to facts or events which can be scientifically described or explained. The most recent developments in the field of philosophic thought are *Behaviorism* and *Neo-Realism.* The former estimates the intrinsic characteristics through an analysis of behavior; the latter may be summed up as the total extinction of idealism.

Baruch de Spinoza, the eminent Dutch philosopher, conceived God to be a substance absolutely self-existent and needing no other conception besides itself to render it complete and intelligible. The nature of this Being was held by Spinoza to be comprehensible only through its attributes, which are *extension* and *thought:* these combine to form an endless variety of *aspects* or modes. The mind of man is one of the modes of infinite thought; the body of man one of the modes of infinite extension. Through reason man is enabled to elevate himself above the illusionary world of the senses and find eternal repose in perfect union with the Divine Essence. Spinoza, it has been said, deprived God of all personality, making Deity synonymous with the universe.

German philosophy had its inception with Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz, whose theories are permeated with the qualities of optimism and idealism. Leibnitz's criteria of *sufficient reason* revealed to him the insufficiency of Descartes' theory of extension, and he therefore concluded that substance itself contained an inherent power in the form of an incalculable number of separate

and all-sufficient units. Matter reduced to its ultimate particles ceases to exist as a substantial body, being resolved into a mass of immaterial ideas or metaphysical units of power, to which Leibnitz applied the term *monad.* Thus the universe is composed of an infinite number of separate monadic entities unfolding spontaneously through the objectification of innate active qualities. All things are conceived as consisting of single monads of varying magnitudes or of aggregations of these bodies, which may exist as physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual substances. God is the first and greatest Monad; the spirit of man is an awakened monad in contradistinction to the lower kingdoms whose governing monadic powers are in a semidormant state.

Though a product of the Leibnitzian-Wolfian school, Immanuel Kant, like Locke, dedicated himself to investigation of the powers and limits of human understanding. The result was his critical philosophy, embracing the critique of pure reason, the critique of practical reason, and the critique of judgment. Dr. W. J. Durant sums up Kant's philosophy in the concise statement that he rescued mind from matter. The mind Kant conceived to be the selector and coordinator of all perceptions, which in turn are the result of sensations grouping themselves about some external object. In the classification of sensations and ideas the mind employs certain categories: of sense, time and space; of understanding, quality, relation, modality, and causation; and the unity of apperception. Being subject to mathematical laws, time and space are considered absolute and sufficient bases for exact thinking. Kant's practical reason declared that while the nature of *noumenon* could never be comprehended by the reason, the fact of morality proves the existence of three necessary postulates: free will, immortality, and God. In the critique of judgment Kant demonstrates the union of the noumenon and the *phenomenon* in art and biological evolution. German *superintellectualism* is the outgrowth of an overemphasis of Kant's theory of the autocratic supremacy of the mind over sensation and thought. The philosophy of Johann Gottlieb Fichte was a projection of Kant's philosophy, wherein he attempted to unite Kant's practical reason with his pure reason. Fichte held that the known is merely the contents of the consciousness of the knower, and that nothing can exist to the knower until it becomes part of those contents. Nothing is actually real, therefore, except the facts of one's own mental experience.

Recognizing the necessity of certain objective realities, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, who succeeded Fichte in the chair of philosophy at Jena, first employed the doctrine of identity as the groundwork for a complete system of philosophy. Whereas Fichte regarded self as the Absolute, von Schelling conceived infinite and eternal Mind to be the all-pervading Cause. Realization of

the Absolute is made possible by intellectual intuition which, being a superior or spiritual sense, is able to dissociate itself from both subject and object. Kant's categories of space and time von Schelling conceived to be positive and negative respectively, and material existence the result of the reciprocal action of these two expressions. Von Schelling also held that the Absolute in its process of self development proceeds according to a law or rhythm consisting of three movements. The first, a reflective movement, is the attempt of the Infinite to embody itself in the finite. The second, that of subsumption, is the attempt of the Absolute to return to the Infinite after involvement in the finite. The third, that of reason, is the neutral point wherein the two former movements are blended.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel considered the intellectual intuition of von Schelling to be philosophically unsound and hence turned his attention to the establishment of a system of philosophy based upon pure logic. Of Hegel it has been said that he began with nothing and showed with logical precision how everything had proceeded from it in logical order. Hegel elevated logic to a position of supreme importance, in fact as a quality of the Absolute itself. God he conceived to be a process of unfolding which never attains to the condition of unfoldment. In like manner, thought is without either beginning or end. Hegel further believed that all things owe their existence to their opposites and that all opposites are actually identical. Thus the only existence is the relationship of opposites to each other, through whose combinations new elements are produced. As the Divine Mind is an eternal process of thought never accomplished, Hegel assails the very foundation of theism and his philosophy limits immortality to the everflowing Deity alone. Evolution is consequently the never-ending flow of Divine Consciousness out of itself; all creation, though continually moving, never arrives at any state other than that of ceaseless flow.

Johann Friedrich Herbart's philosophy was a realistic reaction from the idealism of Fichte and von Schelling. To Herbart the true basis of philosophy was the great mass of phenomena continually moving through the human mind. Examination of phenomena, however, demonstrates that a great part of it is unreal, at least incapable of supplying the mind with actual truth. To correct the false impressions caused by phenomena and discover reality, Herbart believed it necessary to resolve phenomena into separate elements, for reality exists in the elements and not in the whole. He stated that objects can be classified by three general terms: thing, matter, and mind; the first a unit of several properties, the second an existing object, the third a self-conscious being. All three notions give rise, however, to certain contradictions, with whose solution Herbart is primarily concerned. For example, consider matter. Though capable of filling space, if

reduced to its ultimate state it consists of incomprehensibly minute units of divine energy occupying no physical space whatsoever.

The true subject of Arthur Schopenhauer’s philosophy is the will; the object of his philosophy is the elevation of the mind to the point where it is capable of controlling the will. Schopenhauer likens the will to a strong blind man who carries on his shoulders the intellect, which is a weak lame man possessing the power of sight. The will is the tireless cause of manifestation and every part of Nature the product of will. The brain is the product of the will to know; the hand the product of the will to grasp. The entire intellectual and emotional constitutions of man are subservient to the will and are largely concerned with the effort to justify the dictates of the will. Thus the mind creates elaborate systems of thought simply to prove the necessity of the thing willed. Genius, however, represents the state wherein the intellect has gained supremacy over the will and the life is ruled by reason and not by impulse. The strength of Christianity, said Schopenhauer, lay in its pessimism and conquest of individual will. His own religious viewpoints resembled closely the Buddhistic. To him Nirvana represented the subjugation of will. Life—the manifestation of the blind will to live—he viewed as a misfortune, claiming that the true philosopher was one who, recognizing the wisdom of death, resisted the inherent urge to reproduce his kind.

FROM HONE'S ANCIENT MYSTERIES DESCRIBED.

A CHRISTIAN TRINITY.

In an effort to set forth in an appropriate figure the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, it was necessary to devise an image in which the three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—were separate and yet one. In different parts of Europe may be seen figures similar to the above, wherein three faces are united in one head. This is a legitimate method of symbolism, for to those able to realize the sacred significance of the threefold head a great mystery is revealed. However, in the presence of such applications of symbology in Christian art, it is scarcely proper to consider the philosophers of other faiths as benighted if, like the Hindus, they have a three-faced Brahma, or, like the Romans, a two-faced Janus.

Of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche it has been said that his peculiar contribution to the cause of human hope was the glad tidings that God had died of pity! The outstanding features of Nietzsche's philosophy are his doctrine of eternal recurrence and the extreme emphasis placed by him upon the *will to power*—a projection of Schopenhauer's *will to live.* Nietzsche believed the purpose of existence to be the production of a type of all-powerful individual, designated by him the superman. This superman was the product of careful culturing, for if not separated forcibly from the mass and consecrated to the production of power, the individual would sink back to the level of the deadly mediocre. Love, Nietzsche said, should be sacrificed to the production of the superman and those only should marry who are best fitted to produce this outstanding type. Nietzsche also believed in the rule of the aristocracy, both blood and breeding being essential to the establishment of this superior type. Nietzsche's doctrine did not liberate the masses; it rather placed over them supermen for whom their inferior brothers and sisters should be perfectly reconciled to die. Ethically and politically, the superman was a law unto himself. To those who understand the true meaning of power to be virtue, self-control, and truth, the ideality behind Nietzsche's theory is apparent. To the superficial, however, it is a philosophy heartless and calculating, concerned solely with the survival of the fittest.

Of the other German schools of philosophic thought, limitations of space preclude detailed mention. The more recent developments of the German school are *Freudianism* and *Relativism* (often called the Einstein theory). The former is a system of psychoanalysis through psychopathic and neurological phenomena; the latter attacks the accuracy of mechanical principles dependent upon the

present theory of velocity.

René Descartes stands at the head of the French school of philosophy and shares with Sir Francis Bacon the honor of founding the systems of modern science and philosophy. As Bacon based his conclusions upon observation of external things, so Descartes founded his metaphysical philosophy upon observation of internal things. *Cartesianism* (the philosophy of Descartes) first eliminates all things and then replaces as fundamental those premises without which existence is impossible. Descartes defined an idea as that which fills the mind when we conceive a thing. The truth of an idea must be determined by the criteria of clarity and distinctness. Hence Descartes held that a clear and distinct idea must be true. Descartes has the distinction also of evolving his own philosophy without recourse to authority. Consequently his conclusions are built up from the simplest of premises and grow in complexity as the structure of his philosophy takes form.

The *Positive* philosophy of Auguste Comte is based upon the theory that the human intellect develops through three stages of thought. The first and lowest stage is theological; the second, metaphysical; and the third and highest, positive. Thus theology and metaphysics are the feeble intellectual efforts of humanity's child-mind and positivism is the mental expression of the adult intellect. In his *Cours de Philosophie positive,* Comte writes: "In the final, the positive state, the mind has given over the vain search after Absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies itself to the study of their laws,—that is, their invariable relations of succession and resemblance. Reasoning and observation, duly combined, are the means of this knowledge." Comte's theory is described as an "enormous system of materialism." According to Comte, it was formerly said that the heavens declare the glory of God, but now they only recount the glory of Newton and Laplace.

Among the French schools of philosophy are *Traditionalism* (often applied to Christianity), which esteems tradition as the proper foundation for philosophy; the *Sociological* school, which regards humanity as one vast social organism; the *Encyclopedists,* whose efforts to classify knowledge according to the Baconian system revolutionized European thought; *Voltairism,* which assailed the divine origin of the Christian faith and adopted an attitude of extreme skepticism towards all matters pertaining to theology; and Neo-Criticism, a French revision of the doctrines of Immanuel Kant.

Henri Bergson, the intuitionalist, undoubtedly the greatest living French philosopher, presents a theory of mystic anti-intellectualism founded upon the

premise of creative evolution. His rapid rise to popularity is due to his appeal to the finer sentiments in human nature, which rebel against the hope-lessness and helplessness of materialistic science and realistic philosophy. Bergson sees God as life continually struggling against the limitations of matter. He even conceives the possible victory of life over matter, and in time the annihilation of death.

Applying the Baconian method to the mind, John Locke, the great English philosopher, declared that everything which passes through the mind is a legitimate object of mental philosophy, and that these mental phenomena are as real and valid as the objects of any other science. In his investigations of the origin of phenomena Locke departed from the Baconian requirement that it was first necessary to make a natural history of facts. The mind was regarded by Locke to be blank until experience is inscribed upon it. Thus the mind is built up of received impressions plus reflection. The soul Locke believed to be incapable of apprehension of Deity, and man's realization or cognition of God to be merely an inference of the reasoning faculty. David Hume was the most enthusiastic and also the most powerful of the disciples of Locke.

Attacking Locke's sensationalism, Bishop George Berkeley substituted for it a philosophy founded on Locke's fundamental premises but which he developed as a system of idealism. Berkeley held that ideas are the real objects of knowledge. He declared it impossible to adduce proof that sensations are occasioned by material objects; he also attempted to prove that matter has no existence. *Berkeleianism* holds that the universe is permeated and governed by mind. Thus the belief in the existence of material objects is merely a mental condition, and the objects themselves may well be fabrications of the mind. At the same time Berkeley considered it worse than insanity to question the accuracy of the perceptions; for if the power of the perceptive faculties be questioned man is reduced to a creature incapable of knowing, estimating, or realizing anything whatsoever.

In the *Associationalism* of Hartley and Hume was advanced the theory that the association of ideas is the fundamental principle of psychology and the explanation for all mental phenomena. Hartley held that if a sensation be repeated several times there is a tendency towards its spontaneous repetition, which may be awakened by association with some other idea even though the object causing the original reaction be absent. The *Utilitarianism* of Jeremy Bentham, Archdeacon Paley, and James and John Stuart Mill declares that to be the greatest good which is the most useful to the greatest number. John Stuart Mill believed that if it is possible through sensation to secure knowledge of the

properties of things, it is also possible through a higher state of the mind—that is, intuition or reason—to gain a knowledge of the true *substance* of things.

Darwinism is the doctrine of natural selection and physical evolution. It has been said of Charles Robert Darwin that he determined to banish *spirit* altogether from the universe and make the infinite and omnipresent Mind itself synonymous with the all-pervading powers of an impersonal Nature. *Agnosticism* and *Neo-Hegelianism* are also noteworthy products of this period of philosophic thought. The former is the belief that the nature of ultimates is unknowable; the latter an English and American revival of Hegel's idealism.

Dr. W.J. Durant declares that Herbert Spencer's great work, *First Principles,* made him almost at once the most famous philosopher of his time. *Spencerianism* is a philosophic positivism which describes evolution as an ever-increasing complexity with equilibrium as its highest possible state. According to Spencer, life is a continuous process from homogeneity to heterogeneity and back from heterogeneity to homogeneity. Life also involves the continual adjustment of internal relations to external relations. Most famous of all Spencer's aphorisms is his definition of Deity: "God is infinite intelligence, infinitely diversified through infinite time and infinite space, manifesting through an infinitude of ever-evolving individualities." The universality of the law of evolution was emphasized by Spencer, who applied it not only to the form but also to the intelligence behind the form. In every manifestation of being he recognized the fundamental tendency of unfoldment from simplicity to complexity, observing that when the point of equilibrium is reached it is always followed by the process of dissolution. According to Spencer, however, disintegration took place only that reintegration might follow upon a higher level of being.

The chief position in the Italian school of philosophy should be awarded to Giordano Bruno, who, after enthusiastically accepting Copernicus' theory that the sun is the center of the solar system, declared the sun to be a star and all the stars to be suns. In Bruno's time the earth was regarded as the center of all creation. Consequently when he thus relegated the world and man to an obscure corner in space the effect was cataclysmic. For the heresy of affirming a multiplicity of universes and conceiving Cosmos to be so vast that no single creed could fill it, Bruno paid the forfeit of his life.

Vicoism is a philosophy based upon the conclusions of Giovanni Battista Vico, who held that God controls His world not miraculously but through natural law. The laws by which men rule themselves, Vico declared, issue from a spiritual

source within mankind which is *en rapport* with the law of the Deity. Hence material law is of divine origin and reflects the dictates of the Spiritual Father. The philosophy of *Ontologism* developed by Vincenzo Gioberti (generally considered more as a theologian than a philosopher) posits God as the only being and the origin of all knowledge, knowledge being identical with Deity itself. God is consequently called Being; all other manifestations are existences. Truth is to be discovered through reflection upon this mystery.

The most important of modern Italian philosophers is Benedetto Croce, a Hegelian idealist. Croce conceives ideas to be the only reality. He is anti-theological in his viewpoints, does not believe in the immortality of the soul, and seeks to substitute ethics and aesthetics for religion. Among other branches of Italian philosophy should be mentioned *Sensism* (Sensationalism), which posits the sense perceptions as the sole channels for the reception of knowledge; *Criticism,* or the philosophy of accurate judgment; and *Neo-Scholasticism,* which is a revival of Thomism encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church.

The two outstanding schools of American philosophy are *Transcendentalism* and *Pragmatism.* Transcendentalism, exemplified in the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, emphasizes the power of the transcendental over the physical. Many of Emerson's writings show pronounced Oriental influence, particularly his essays on the Oversoul and the Law of Compensation. The theory of Pragmatism, while not original with Professor William James, owes its widespread popularity as a philosophic tenet to his efforts. Pragmatism may be defined as the doctrine that the meaning and nature of things are to be discovered from consideration of their consequences. The true, according to James, "is only an expedient in the way of our thinking, just as 'the right' is only an expedient in the way of our behaving." (See his *Pragmatism*.) John Dewey, the *Instrumentalist,* who applies the experimental attitude to all the aims of life, should be considered a commentator of James. To Dewey, growth and change are limitless and no ultimates are postulated. The long residence in America of George Santayana warrants the listing of this great Spaniard among the ranks of American philosophers. Defending himself with the shield of skepticism alike from the illusions of the senses and the cumulative errors of the ages, Santayana seeks to lead mankind into a more apprehending state denominated by him *the life of reason.*

(In addition to the authorities already quoted, in the preparation of the foregoing abstract of the main branches of philosophic thought the present writer has had recourse to Stanley's *History of Philosophy;* Morell's *An Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century;*

Singer's *Modern Thinkers and Present Problems;* Rand's *Modern Classical Philosophers;* Windelband's *History of Philosophy;* Perry's *Present Philosophical Tendencies;* Hamilton's *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic;* and Durant's *The Story of Philosophy*.) Having thus traced the more or less sequential development of philosophic speculation from Thales to James and Bergson, it is now in order to direct the reader's attention to the elements leading to and the circumstances attendant upon the genesis of philosophic thinking. Although the Hellenes proved themselves peculiarly responsive to the disciplines of philosophy, this science of sciences should not be considered indigenous to them. "Although some of the Grecians," writes Thomas Stanley, "have challenged to their nation the original of philosophy, yet the more learned of them have acknowledged it [to be] derived from the East." The magnificent institutions of Hindu, Chaldean, and Egyptian learning must be recognized as the actual source of Greek wisdom. The last was patterned after the shadow cast by the sanctuaries of Ellora, Ur, and Memphis upon the thought substance of a primitive people. Thales, Pythagoras, and Plato in their philosophic wanderings contacted many distant cults and brought back the lore of Egypt and the inscrutable Orient.

From indisputable facts such as these it is evident that philosophy emerged from the religious Mysteries of antiquity, not being separated from religion until after the decay of the Mysteries. Hence he who would fathom the depths of philosophic thought must familiarize himself with the teachings of those initiated priests designated as the first custodians of divine revelation. The Mysteries claimed to be the guardians of a transcendental knowledge so profound as to be incomprehensible save to the most exalted intellect and so potent as to be revealed with safety only to those in whom personal ambition was dead and who had consecrated their lives to the unselfish service of humanity. Both the dignity of these sacred institutions and the validity of their claim to possession of Universal Wisdom are attested by the most illustrious philosophers of antiquity, who were themselves initiated into the profundities of the secret doctrine and who bore witness to its efficacy.

The question may legitimately be propounded: If these ancient mystical institutions were of such "great pith and moment," why is so little information now available concerning them and the arcana they claimed to possess? The answer is simple enough: The Mysteries were secret societies, binding their initiates to inviolable secrecy, and avenging with death the betrayal of their sacred trusts. Although these schools were the true inspiration of the various doctrines promulgated by the ancient philosophers, the fountainhead of those

doctrines was never revealed to the profane. Furthermore, in the lapse of time the teachings became so inextricably linked with the names of their disseminators that the actual but recondite source—the Mysteries—came to be wholly ignored.

Symbolism is the language of the Mysteries; in fact it is the language not only of mysticism and philosophy but of all Nature, for every law and power active in universal procedure is manifested to the limited sense perceptions of man through the medium of symbol. Every form existing in the diversified sphere of being is symbolic of the divine activity by which it is produced. By symbols men have ever sought to communicate to each other those thoughts which transcend the limitations of language. Rejecting man-conceived dialects as inadequate and unworthy to perpetuate divine ideas, the Mysteries thus chose symbolism as a far more ingenious and ideal method of preserving their transcendental knowledge. In a single figure a symbol may both reveal and conceal, for to the wise the subject of the symbol is obvious, while to the ignorant the figure remains inscrutable. Hence, he who seeks to unveil the secret doctrine of antiquity must search for that doctrine not upon the open pages of books which might fall into the hands of the unworthy but in the place where it was originally concealed.

Far-sighted were the initiates of antiquity. They realized that nations come and go, that empires rise and fall, and that the golden ages of art, science, and idealism are succeeded by the dark ages of superstition. With the needs of posterity foremost in mind, the sages of old went to inconceivable extremes to make certain that their knowledge should be preserved. They engraved it upon the face of mountains and concealed it within the measurements of colossal images, each of which was a geometric marvel. Their knowledge of chemistry and mathematics they hid within mythologies which the ignorant would perpetuate, or in the spans and arches of their temples which time has not entirely obliterated. They wrote in characters that neither the vandalism of men nor the ruthlessness of the elements could completely efface. Today men gaze with awe and reverence upon the mighty Memnons standing alone on the sands of Egypt, or upon the strange terraced pyramids of Palanque. Mute testimonies these are of the lost arts and sciences of antiquity; and concealed this wisdom must remain until this race has learned to read the universal language—SYMBOLISM.

The book to which this is the introduction is dedicated to the proposition that concealed within the emblematic figures, allegories, and rituals of the ancients is a secret doctrine concerning the inner mysteries of life, which doctrine has been

preserved *in toto* among a small band of initiated minds since the beginning of the world. Departing, these illumined philosophers left their formulae that others, too, might attain to understanding. But, lest these secret processes fall into uncultured hands and be perverted, the Great Arcanum was always concealed in symbol or allegory; and those who can today discover its lost keys may open with them a treasure house of philosophic, scientific, and religious truths.

II

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies Which Have Influenced Modern Masonic Symbolism

PART I

Then confronted with a problem involving the use of the reasoning faculties, individuals of strong intellect keep their poise, and seek to reach a solution by obtaining facts bearing upon the question. Those of immature mentality, on the other hand, when similarly confronted, are overwhelmed. While the former may be qualified to solve the riddle of their own destiny, the latter must be led like a flock of sheep and taught in simple language. They depend almost entirely upon the ministrations of the shepherd. The Apostle Paul said that these little ones must be fed with milk, but that meat is the food of strong men. Thoughtlessness is almost synonymous with childishness, while thought*fulness* is symbolic of maturity.

There are, however, but few mature minds in the world; and thus it was that the philosophic-religious doctrines of the pagans were divided to meet the needs of these two fundamental groups of human intellect—one philosophic, the other incapable of appreciating the deeper mysteries of life. To the discerning few were revealed the *esoteric*, or spiritual, teachings, while the unqualified many received only the literal, or *exoteric*, interpretations. In order to make simple the great truths of Nature and the abstract principles of natural law, the vital forces of the universe were personified, becoming the gods and goddesses of the ancient mythologies. While the ignorant multitudes brought their offerings to the altars of Priapus and Pan (deities representing the procreative energies), the wise recognized in these marble statues only symbolic concretions of great abstract truths.

In all cities of the ancient world were temples for public worship and offering. In every community also were philosophers and mystics, deeply versed in Nature's lore. These individuals were usually banded together, forming seclusive philosophic and religious schools. The more important of these groups were known as the *Mysteries.* Many of the great minds of antiquity were initiated into these secret fraternities by strange and mysterious rites, some of which were extremely cruel. Alexander Wilder defines the Mysteries as "Sacred dramas performed at stated periods. The most celebrated were those of Isis, Sabazius, Cybele, and Eleusis." After being admitted, the initiates were instructed in the secret wisdom which had been preserved for ages. Plato, an initiate of one of these sacred orders, was severely criticized because in his writings he revealed to

the public many of the secret philosophic principles of the Mysteries.

Every pagan nation had (and has) not only its state religion, but another into which the philosophic elect alone have gained entrance. Many of these ancient cults vanished from the earth without revealing their secrets, but a few have survived the test of ages and their mysterious symbols are still preserved. Much of the ritualism of Freemasonry is based on the trials to which candidates were subjected by the ancient hierophants before the keys of wisdom were entrusted to them.

Few realize the extent to which the ancient secret schools influenced contemporary intellects and, through those minds, posterity. Robert Macoy, 33°, in his *General History of Freemasonry*, pays a magnificent tribute to the part played by the ancient Mysteries in the rearing of the edifice of human culture. He says, in part: “It appears that all the perfection of civilization, and all the advancement made in philosophy, science, and art among the ancients are due to those institutions which, under the veil of mystery, sought to illustrate the sublimest truths of religion, morality, and virtue, and impress them on the hearts of their disciples. * Their chief object was to teach the doctrine of one God, the resurrection of man to eternal life, the dignity of the human soul, and to lead the people to see the shadow of the deity, in the beauty, magnificence, and splendor of the universe.”

With the decline of virtue, which has preceded the destruction of every nation of history, the Mysteries became perverted. Sorcery took the place of the divine magic. Indescribable practices (such as the Bacchanalia) were introduced, and perversion ruled supreme; for no institution can be any better than the members of which it is composed. In despair, the few who were true sought to preserve the secret doctrines from oblivion. In some cases they succeeded, but more often the arcanum was lost and only the empty shell of the Mysteries remained.

Thomas Taylor has written, “Man is naturally a religious animal.” From the earliest dawning of his consciousness, man has worshiped and revered *things* as symbolic of the invisible, omnipresent, indescribable *Thing*, concerning which he could discover practically nothing. The pagan Mysteries opposed the Christians during the early centuries of their church, declaring that the new faith (Christianity) did not demand virtue and integrity as requisites for salvation. Celsus expressed himself on the subject in the following caustic terms:

“That I do not, however, accuse the Christians more bitterly than truth compels, may be conjectured from hence, that the cryers who call men to other

mysteries proclaim as follows: ‘Let him approach whose hands are pure, and whose words are wise.’ And again, others proclaim: ‘Let him approach who is pure from all wickedness, whose soul is not conscious of any evil, and who leads a just and upright life.’ And these things are proclaimed by those who promise a purification from error. Let us now hear who those are that are called to the Christian mysteries: Whoever is a sinner, whoever is unwise, whoever is a fool, and whoever, in short, is miserable, him the kingdom of God will receive. Do you not, therefore, call a sinner, an unjust man, a thief, a housebreaker, a wizard, one who is sacrilegious, and a robber of sepulchres? What other persons would the cryer nominate, who should call robbers together?”

It was not the true faith of the early Christian mystics that Celsus attacked, but the false forms that were creeping in even during his day. The ideals of early Christianity were based upon the high moral standards of the pagan Mysteries, and the first Christians who met under the city of Rome used as their places of worship the subterranean temples of Mithras, from whose cult has been borrowed much of the sacerdotalism of the modern church.

The ancient philosophers believed that no man could live intelligently who did not have a fundamental knowledge of Nature and her laws. Before man can obey, he must understand, and the Mysteries were devoted to instructing man concerning the operation of divine law in the terrestrial sphere. Few of the early cults actually worshiped anthropomorphic deities, although their symbolism might lead one to believe they did. They were moralistic rather than religionistic; philosophic rather than theologic. They taught man to use his faculties more intelligently, to be patient in the face of adversity, to be courageous when confronted by danger, to be true in the midst of temptation, and, most of all, to view a worthy life as the most acceptable sacrifice to God, and his body as an altar sacred to the Deity.

Sun worship played an important part in nearly all the early pagan Mysteries. This indicates the probability of their Atlantean origin, for the people of Atlantis were sun worshipers. The Solar Deity was usually personified as a beautiful youth, with long golden hair to symbolize the rays of the sun. This golden Sun God was slain by wicked ruffians, who personified the evil principle of the universe. By means of certain rituals and ceremonies, symbolic of purification and regeneration, this wonderful God of Good was brought back to life and became the Savior of His people. The secret processes whereby He was resurrected symbolized those cultures by means of which man is able to overcome his lower nature, master his appetites, and give expression to the

higher side of himself. The Mysteries were organized for the purpose of assisting the struggling human creature to reawaken the spiritual powers which, surrounded by the flaming ring of lust and degeneracy, lay asleep within his soul. In other words, man was offered a way by which he could regain his lost estate. (See Wagner's *Siegfried*.)

In the ancient world, nearly all the secret societies were philosophic and religious. During the mediaeval centuries, they were chiefly religious and political, although a few philosophic schools remained. In modern times, secret societies, in the Occidental countries, are largely political or fraternal, although in a few of them, as in Masonry, the ancient religious and philosophic principles still survive.

Space prohibits a detailed discussion of the secret schools. There were literally scores of these ancient cults, with branches in all parts of the Eastern and Western worlds. Some, such as those of Pythagoras and the Hermetists, show a decided Oriental influence, while the Rosicrucians, according to their own proclamations, gained much of their wisdom from Arabian mystics. Although the Mystery schools are usually associated with civilization, there is evidence that the most uncivilized peoples of prehistoric times had a knowledge of them. Natives of distant islands, many in the lowest forms of savagery, have mystic rituals and secret practices which, although primitive, are of a decided Masonic tinge.

The Druidic Mysteries of Britain and Gaul

"The original and primitive inhabitants of Britain, at some remote period, revived and reformed their national institutes. Their priest, or instructor, had hithero been simply named Gwydd, but it was considered to have become necessary to divide this office between the national, or superior, priest and another whose influence [would] be more limited. From henceforth the former became Der-Wydd (Druid), or superior instructor, and [the latter] Go-Wydd, or O-Vydd (Ovate), subordinate instructor; and both went by the general name of Beirdd (Bards), or teachers of wisdom. As the system matured and augmented, the Bardic Order consisted of three classes, the Druids, Beirdd Braint, or privileged Bards, and Ovates." (See Samuel Meyrick and Charles Smith, *The Costume of The Original Inhabitants of The British Islands*.)

The origin of the word *Druid* is under dispute. Max Müller believes that, like the Irish word *Drui,* it means "the men of the oak trees." He further draws attention to the fact that the forest gods and tree deities of the Greeks were called *dryades.* Some believe the word to be of Teutonic origin; others ascribe it to the Welsh. A few trace it to the Gaelic *druidh,* which means "a wise man" or "a sorcerer." In Sanskrit the word *dru* means "timber."

At the time of the Roman conquest, the Druids were thoroughly ensconced in Britain and Gaul. Their power over the people was unquestioned, and there were instances in which armies, about to attack each other, sheathed their swords when ordered to do so by the white-robed Druids. No undertaking of great importance was started without the assistance of these patriarchs, who stood as mediators between the gods and men. The Druidic Order is deservedly credited with having had a deep understanding of Nature and her laws. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* states that geography, physical science, natural theology, and astrology were their favorite studies. The Druids had a fundamental knowledge of medicine, especially the use of herbs and *simples.* Crude surgical instruments also have been found in England and Ireland. An odd treatise on early British medicine states that every practitioner was expected to have a garden or back yard for the growing of certain herbs necessary to his

profession. Eliphas Levi, the celebrated transcendentalist, makes the following significant statement:

“The Druids were priests and physicians, curing by magnetism and charging amylets with their fluidic influence. Their universal remedies were mistletoe and serpents’ eggs, because these substances attract the astral light in a special manner. The solemnity with which mistletoe was cut down drew upon this plant the popular confidence and rendered it powerfully magnetic. * The progress of magnetism will some day reveal to us the absorbing properties of mistletoe. We shall then understand the secret of those spongy growths which drew the unused virtues of plants and become surcharged with tinctures and savors. Mushrooms, truffles, gall on trees, and the different kinds of mistletoe will be employed with understanding by a medical science, which will be new because it is old * but one must not move quicker than science, which recedes that it may advance the further.” (See *The History of Magic*.)

Not only was the mistletoe sacred as symbolic of the universal medicine, or panacea, but also because of the fact that it grew upon the oak tree. Through the symbol of the oak, the Druids worshiped the Supreme Deity; therefore, anything growing upon that tree was sacred to Him. At certain seasons, according to the positions of the sun, moon, and stars, the Arch-Druid climbed the oak tree and cut the mistletoe with a golden sickle consecrated for that service. The parasitic growth was caught in white cloths provided for the purpose, lest it touch the earth and be polluted by terrestrial vibrations. Usually a sacrifice of a white bull was made under the tree.

The Druids were initiates of a secret school that existed in their midst. This school, which closely resembled the Bacchic and Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece or the Egyptian rites of Isis and Osiris, is justly designated the *Druidic Mysteries.* There has been much speculation concerning the secret wisdom that the Druids claimed to possess. Their secret teachings were never written, but were communicated orally to specially prepared candidates. Robert Brown, 32°, is of the opinion that the British priests secured their information from Tyrian and Phœnician navigators who, thousands of years before the Christian Era, established colonies in Britain and Gaul while searching for tin. Thomas Maurice, in his *Indian Antiquities,* discourses at length on Phœnician, Carthaginian, and Greek expeditions to the British Isles for the purpose of procuring tin. Others are of the opinion that the Mysteries as celebrated by the Druids were of Oriental origin, possibly Buddhistic.

The proximity of the British Isles to the lost Atlantis may account for the sun

worship which plays an important part in the rituals of Druidism. According to Artemidorus, Ceres and Persephone were worshiped on an island close to Britain with rites and ceremonies similar to those of Samothrace. There is no doubt that the Druidic Pantheon includes a large number of Greek and Roman deities. This greatly amazed Cæsar during his conquest of Britain and Gaul, and caused him to affirm that these tribes adored Mercury, Apollo, Mars, and Jupiter, in a manner similar to that of the Latin countries. It is almost certain that the Druidic Mysteries were not indigenous to Britain or Gaul, but migrated from one of the more ancient civilizations.

The school of the Druids was divided into three distinct parts, and the secret teachings embodied therein are practically the same as the mysteries concealed under the allegories of Blue Lodge Masonry. The lowest of the three divisions was that of Ovate (Ovydd). This was an honorary degree, requiring no special purification or preparation. The Ovates dressed in green, the Druidic color of learning, and were expected to know something about medicine, astronomy, poetry if possible, and sometimes music. An Ovate was an individual admitted to the Druidic Order because of his general excellence and superior knowledge concerning the problems of life.

The second division was that of Bard (Beirdd). Its members were robed in sky-blue, to represent harmony and truth, and to them was assigned the labor of memorizing, at least in part, the twenty thousand verses of Druidic sacred poetry. They were often pictured with the primitive British or Irish harp—an instrument strung with human hair, and having as many strings as there were ribs on one side of the human body. These Bards were often chosen as teachers of candidates seeking entrance into the Druidic Mysteries. Neophytes wore striped robes of blue, green, and white, these being the three sacred colors of the Druidic Order.

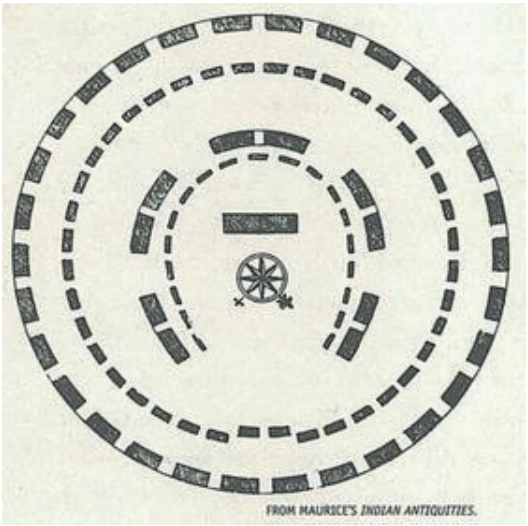
The third division was that of Druid (Derwyddon). Its particular labor was to minister to the religious needs of the people. To reach this dignity, the candidate must first become a Bard Braint. The Druids always dressed in white—symbolic of their purity, and the color used by them to symbolize the sun.

In order to reach the exalted position of *Arch-Druid,* or spiritual head of the organization, it was necessary for a priest to pass through the six successive degrees of the Druidic Order. (The members of the different degrees were differentiated by the colors of their sashes, for all of them wore robes of white.) Some writers are of the opinion that the title of *Arch-Druid* was hereditary, descending from father to son, but it is more probable that the honor was conferred by ballot election. Its recipient was chosen for his virtues and integrity

from the most learned members of the higher Druidic degrees.

According to James Gardner, there were usually two *Arch-Druids* in Britain, one residing on the Isle of Anglesea and the other on the Isle of Man. Presumably there were others in Gaul. These dignitaries generally carried golden scepters and were crowned with wreaths of oak leaves, symbolic of their authority. The younger members of the Druidic Order were clean-shaven and modestly dressed, but the more aged had long gray beards and wore magnificent golden ornaments. The educational system of the Druids in Britain was superior to that of their colleagues on the Continent, and consequently many of the Gallic youths were sent to the Druidic colleges in Britain for their philosophical instruction and training.

Eliphas Levi states that the Druids lived in strict abstinence, studied the natural sciences, preserved the deepest secrecy, and admitted new members only after long probationary periods. Many of the priests of the order lived in buildings not unlike the monasteries of the modern world. They were associated in groups like ascetics of the Far East. Although celibacy was not demanded of them, few married. Many of the Druids retired from the world and lived as recluses in caves, in rough-stone houses, or in little shacks built in the depths of a forest. Here they prayed and meditated, emerging only to perform their religious duties.



THE GROUND PLAN OF STONEHENGE.

The Druid temples or places of religious worship were not patterned after those

of other nations. Most of their ceremonies were performed at night, either in thick groves of oak trees or around open-air altars built of great uncut stones. How these masses of rock were moved has not been satisfactorily explained. The most famous of their altars, a great ring of rocks, is Stonehenge, in Southwestern England. This structure, laid out on an astronomical basis, still stands, a wonder of antiquity.

James Freeman Clarke, in his *Ten Great Religions*, describes the beliefs of the Druids as follows: “The Druids believed in three worlds and in transmigration from one to the other: In a world above this, in which happiness predominated; a world below, of misery; and this present state. This transmigration was to punish and reward and also to purify the soul. In the present world, said they, Good and Evil are so exactly balanced that man has the utmost freedom and is able to choose or reject either. The Welsh Triads tell us there are three objects of metempsychosis: to collect into the soul the properties of all being, to acquire a knowledge of all things, and to get power to conquer evil. There are also, they say, three kinds of knowledge: knowledge of the name of each thing, of its cause, and its influence. There are three things which continually grow less: darkness, falsehood, and death. There are three which constantly increase: light, life, and truth.”

Like nearly all schools of the Mysteries, the teachings of the Druids were divided into two distinct sections. The simpler, a moral code, was taught to all the people, while the deeper, esoteric doctrine was given only to initiated priests. To be admitted to the order, a candidate was required to be of good family and of high moral character. No important secrets were intrusted to him until he had been tempted in many ways and his strength of character severely tried. The Druids taught the people of Britain and Gaul concerning the immortality of the soul. They believed in transmigration and apparently in reincarnation. They borrowed in one life, promising to pay back in the next. They believed in a purgatorial type of hell where they would be purged of their sins, afterward passing on to the happiness of unity with the gods. The Druids taught that all men would be saved, but that some must return to earth many times to learn the lessons of human life and to overcome the inherent evil of their own natures.

Before a candidate was intrusted with the secret doctrines of the Druids, he was bound with a vow of secrecy. These doctrines were imparted only in the depths of forests and in the darkness of caves. In these places, far from the haunts of men, the neophyte was instructed concerning the creation of the

universe, the personalities of the gods, the laws of Nature, the secrets of occult medicine, the mysteries of the celestial bodies, and the rudiments of magic and sorcery. The Druids had a great number of feast days. The new and full moon and the sixth day of the moon were sacred periods. It is believed that initiations took place only at the two solstices and the two equinoxes. At dawn of the 25th day of December, the birth of the Sun God was celebrated.

The secret teachings of the Druids are said by some to be tinctured with Pythagorean philosophy. The Druids had a Madonna, or Virgin Mother, with a Child in her arms, who was sacred to their Mysteries; and their Sun God was resurrected at the time of the year corresponding to that at which modern Christians celebrate Easter.

Both the cross and the serpent were sacred to the Druids, who made the former by cutting off all the branches of an oak tree and fastening one of them to the main trunk in the form of the letter T. This oaken cross became symbolic of their superior Deity. They also worshiped the sun, moon, and stars. The moon received their special veneration. Cæsar stated that Mercury was one of the chief deities of the Gauls. The Druids are believed to have worshiped Mercury under the similitude of a stone cube. They also had great veneration for the Nature spirits (fairies, gnomes, and undines), little creatures of the forests and rivers to whom many offerings were made. Describing the temples of the Druids, Charles Heckethorn, in *The Secret Societies of All Ages & Countries, says:*

“Their temples wherein the sacred fire was preserved were generally situate on eminences and in dense groves of oak, and assumed various forms—circular, because a circle was the emblem of the universe; oval, in allusion to the mundane egg, from which issued, according to the traditions of many nations, the universe, or, according to others, our first parents; serpentine, because a serpent was the symbol of Hu, the Druidic Osiris; cruciform, because a cross is an emblem of regeneration; or winged, to represent the motion of the Divine Spirit. * Their chief deities were reducible to two—a male and a female, the great father and mother—Hu and Ceridwen, distinguished by the same characteristics as belong to Osiris and Isis, Bacchus and Ceres, or any other supreme god and goddess representing the two principles of all Being.”

Godfrey Higgins states that *Hu,* the Mighty, regarded as the first settler of Britain, came from a place which the Welsh *Triads* call the Summer Country, the present site of Constantinople. Albert Pike says that the Lost Word of Masonry is concealed in the name of the Druid god *Hu*. The meager information extant concerning the secret initiations of the Druids indicates a decided similarity

between their Mystery school and the schools of Greece and Egypt. *Hu*, the Sun God, was murdered and, after a number of strange ordeals and mystic rituals, was restored to life.

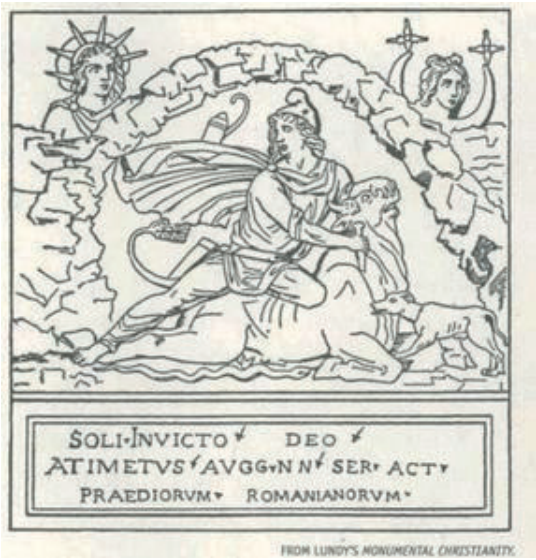
There were three degrees of the Druidic Mysteries, but few successfully passed them all. The candidate was buried in a coffin, as symbolic of the death of the Sun God. The supreme test, however, was being sent out to sea in an open boat. While undergoing this ordeal, many lost their lives. Taliesin, an ancient scholar, who passed through the Mysteries, describes the initiation of the open boat in Faber's *Pagan Idolatry.* The few who passed this third degree were said to have been "born again," and were instructed in the secret and hidden truths which the Druid priests had preserved from antiquity. From these initiates were chosen many of the dignitaries of the British religious and political world. (For further details, see Faber's *Pagan Idolatry*, Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*, and Godfrey Higgins' *Celtic Druids*.)

The Rites of Mithras

When the Persian Mysteries immigrated into Southern Europe, they were quickly assimilated by the Latin mind. The cult grew rapidly, especially among the Roman soldiery, and during the Roman wars of conquest the teachings were carried by the legionaries to nearly all parts of Europe. So powerful did the cult of Mithras become that at least one Roman Emperor was initiated into the order, which met in caverns under the city of Rome. Concerning the spread of this Mystery school through different parts of Europe, C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Remains,* says:

"Mithraic bas-reliefs cut on the faces of rocks or on stone tablets still abound in the countries formerly the western provinces of the Roman Empire; many exist in Germany, still more in France, and in this island (Britain) they have often been discovered on the line of the Picts' Wall and the noted one at Bath."

Alexander Wilder, in his *Philosophy and Ethics of the Zoroasters,* states that *Mithras* is the Zend title for the sun, and he is supposed to dwell within that shining orb. *Mithras* has a male and a female aspect, though not himself androgynous. As *Mitlaras*, he is the lord of the sun, powerful and radiant, and most magnificent of the *Yazatas* (Izads, or Genii, of the sun). As *Mithra*, this deity represents the feminine principle; the mundane universe is recognized as her symbol. She represents Nature as receptive and terrestrial, and as fruitful only when bathed in the glory of the solar orb. The Mithraic cult is a simplication of the more elaborate teachings of Zarathustra (Zoroaster), the Persian fire magician.



MITHRAS SLAYING THE BULL.

The most famous sculpturings and reliefs of this prototokos show Mithras kneeling upon the recumbent form of a great bull, into whose throat he is driving a sword. The slaying of the bull signifies that the rays of the sun, symbolized by the sword, release at the vernal equinox the vital essences of the earth—the blood of the bull—which, pouring from the wound made by the Sun God, fertilize the seeds of living things. Dogs were held sacred to the cult of Mithras, being symbolic of sincerity and trustworthiness. The Mithraics used the serpent as an emblem of Ahriman, the Spirit of Evil, and water rats were held sacred to him. The bull is esoterically the Constellation of Taurus; the serpent, its opposite in the zodiac, Scorpio; the sun, Mithras, entering into the side of the bull stays the celestial creature and nourishes the universe with its blood.

According to the Persians, there coexisted in eternity two principles. The first of these, *Ahura-Mazda* , *or Ormuzd*, was the Spirit of Good. From Ormuzd came forth a number of hierarchies of good and beautiful spirits (angels and archangels). The second of these eternally existing principles was called *Ahriman*. He was also a pure and beautiful spirit, but he later rebelled against Ormuzd, being jealous of his power. This did not occur, however, until after Ormuzd had created light, for previously Ahriman had not been conscious of the existence of Ormuzd. Because of his jealousy and rebellion, Ahriman became the Spirit of Evil. From himself he individualized a host of destructive creatures

to injure Ormuzd.

When Ormuzd created the earth, Ahriman entered into its grosser elements. Whenever Ormuzd did a good deed, Ahriman placed the principle of evil within it. At last when Ormuzd created the human race, Ahriman became incarnate in the lower nature of man so that in each personality the Spirit of Good and the Spirit of Evil struggle for control. For 3,000 years Ormuzd ruled the celestial worlds with light and goodness. Then he created man. For another 3,000 years he ruled man with wisdom and integrity. Then the power of Ahriman began, and the struggle for the soul of man continues through the next period of 3,000 years. During the fourth period of 3,000 years, the power of Ahriman will be destroyed. Good will return to the world again, evil and death will be vanquished, and at last the Spirit of Evil will bow humbly before the throne of Ormuzd. While Ormuzd and Ahriman are struggling for control of the human soul and for supremacy in Nature, Mithras, God of Intelligence, stands as mediator between the two. Many authors have noted the similarity between mercury and Mithras. As the chemical mercury acts as a solvent (according to alchemists), so Mithras seeks to harmonize the two celestial opposites.

There are many points of resemblance between Christianity and the cult of Mithras. One of the reasons for this probably is that the Persian mystics invaded Italy during the first century after Christ and the early history of both cults was closely interwoven. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* makes the following statement concerning the Mithraic and Christian Mysteries:

“The fraternal and democratic spirit of the first communities, and their humble origin; the identification of the object of adoration with light and the sun; the legends of the shepherds with their gifts and adoration, the flood, and the ark; the representation in art of the fiery chariot, the drawing of water from the rock; the use of bell and candle, holy water and the communion; the sanctification of Sunday and of the 25th of December; the insistence on moral conduct, the emphasis placed on abstinence and self-control; the doctrine of heaven and hell, of primitive revelation, of the mediation of the Logos emanating from the divine, the atoning sacrifice, the constant warfare between good and evil and the final triumph of the former, the immortality of the soul, the last judgment, the resurrection of the flesh and the fiery destruction of the universe—[these] are some of the resemblances which, whether real or only apparent, enabled Mithraism to prolong its resistance to Christianity.”

The rites of Mithras were performed in caves. Porphyry, in his *Cave of the Nymphs,* states that Zarathustra (Zoroaster) was the first to consecrate a cave to

the worship of God, because a cavern was symbolic of the earth, or the lower world of darkness. John P. Lundy, in his *Monumental Christianity*, describes the cave of Mithras as follows:

"But this cave was adorned with the signs of the zodiac, Cancer and Capricorn. The summer and winter solstices were chiefly conspicuous, as the gates of souls descending into this life, or passing out of it in their ascent to the Gods; Cancer being the gate of descent, and Capricorn of ascent. These are the two avenues of the immortals passing up and down from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth."

The so-called chair of St. Peter, in Rome, was believed to have been used in one of the pagan Mysteries, possibly that of Mithras, in whose subterranean grottoes the votaries of the Christian Mysteries met in the early days of their faith. In *Anacalypsis*, Godfrey Higgins writes that in 1662, while cleaning this sacred chair of Bar-Jonas, the Twelve Labors of Hercules were discovered upon it, and that later the French discovered upon the same chair the Mohammedan confession of faith, written in Arabic.

Initiation into the rites of Mithras, like initiation into many other ancient schools of philosophy, apparently consisted of three important degrees. Preparation for these degrees consisted of self-purification, the building up of the intellectual powers, and the control of the animal nature. In the first degree the candidate was given a crown upon the point of a sword and instructed in the mysteries of Mithras' hidden power. Probably he was taught that the golden crown represented his own spiritual nature, which must be objectified and unfolded before he could truly glorify Mithras; for Mithras was his own soul, standing as mediator between Ormuzd, his spirit, and Ahriman, his animal nature. In the second degree he was given the armor of intelligence and purity and sent into the darkness of subterranean pits to fight the beasts of lust, passion, and degeneracy. In the third degree he was given a cape, upon which were drawn or woven the signs of the zodiac and other astronomical symbols. After his initiations were over, he was hailed as one who had risen from the dead, was instructed in the secret teachings of the Persian mystics, and became a full-fledged member of the order. Candidates who successfully passed the Mithraic initiations were called Lions and were marked upon their foreheads with the Egyptian cross. Mithras himself is often pictured with the head of a lion and two pairs of wings. Throughout the entire ritual were repeated references to the birth of Mithras as the Sun God, his sacrifice for man, his death that men might have eternal life, and lastly, his resurrection and the saving of all humanity by his

intercession before the throne of Ormuzd. (See Heckethorn.)

While the cult of Mithras did not reach the philosophic heights attained by Zarathustra, its effect upon the civilization of the Western world was far-reaching, for at one time nearly all Europe was converted to its doctrines. Rome, in her intercourse with other nations, inoculated them with her religious principles; and many later institutions have exhibited Mithraic culture. The reference to the “Lion” and the “Grip of the Lion’s Paw” in the Master Mason’s degree have a strong Mithraic tinge and may easily have originated from this cult. A ladder of seven rungs appears in the Mithraic initiation. Faber is of the opinion that this ladder was originally a pyramid of seven steps. It is possible that the Masonic ladder with seven rungs had its origin in this Mithraic symbol. Women were never permitted to enter the Mithraic Order, but children of the male sex were initiates long before they reached maturity. The refusal to permit women to join the Masonic Order may be based on the esoteric reason given in the secret instructions of the Mithraics. This cult is another excellent example of those secret societies whose legends are largely symbolic representations of the sun and his journey through the houses of the heavens. Mithras, rising from a stone, is merely the sun rising over the horizon, or, as the ancients supposed, out of the horizon, at the vernal equinox.

John O‘Neill disputes the theory that Mithras was intended as a solar deity. In *The Night of the Gods* he writes: “The Avestan Mithra, the yazata of light, has ‘10,000 eyes, high, with full knowledge (perethuvaedayana), strong, sleepless and ever awake (jaghaurvaunghem).’ The supreme god Ahura Mazda also has one Eye, or else it is said that ‘with his eyes, the sun, moon and stars, he sees everything.’ The theory that Mithra was *originally* a title of the supreme heavens-god—putting the sun out of court—is the only one that answers all requirements. It will be evident that here we have origins in abundance for the Freemason’s Eye and ‘its nunquam dormio.”’ The reader must not confuse the Persian Mithra with the Vedic Mitra. According to Alexander Wilder, “The Mithraic rites superseded the Mysteries of Bacchus, and became the foundation of the Gnostic system, which for many centuries prevailed in Asia, Egypt, and even the remote West.”

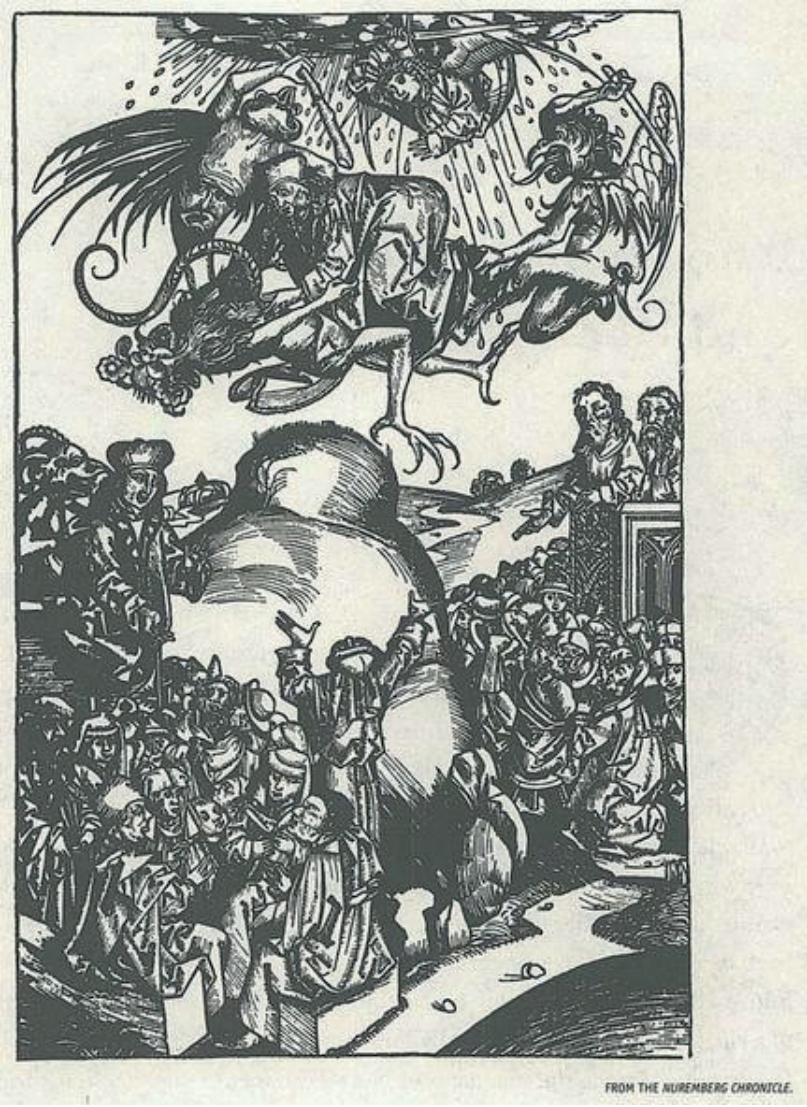
III

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies

PART II

The entire history of Christian and pagan Gnosticism is shrouded in the deepest mystery and obscurity; for, while the Gnostics were undoubtedly prolific writers, little of their literature has survived. They brought down upon themselves the animosity of the early Christian Church, and when this institution reached its position of world power it destroyed all available records of the Gnostic *cultus.* The name *Gnostic* means *wisdom,* or *knowledge,* and is derived from the Greek *Gnosis.* The members of the order claimed to be familiar with the secret doctrines of early Christianity. They interpreted the Christian Mysteries according to pagan symbolism. Their secret information and philosophic tenets they concealed from the profane and taught to a small group only of especially initiated persons.

Simon Magus, the magician of New Testament fame, is often supposed to have been the founder of Gnosticism. If this be true, the sect was formed during the century after Christ and is probably the first of the many branches which have sprung from the main trunk of Christianity. Everything with which the enthusiasts of the early Christian Church might not agree they declared to be inspired by the Devil. That Simon Magus had mysterious and supernatural powers is conceded even by his enemies, but they maintained that these powers were lent to him by the infernal spirits and furies which they asserted were his ever present companions. Undoubtedly the most interesting legend concerning Simon is that which tells of his theosophic contests with the Apostle Peter while the two were promulgating their differing doctrines in Rome. According to the story that the Church Fathers have preserved, Simon was to prove his spiritual superiority by ascending to heaven in a chariot of fire. He was actually picked up and carried many feet into the air by invisible powers. When St. Peter saw this, he cried out in a loud voice, ordering the demons (spirits of the air) to release their hold upon the magician. The evil spirits, when so ordered by the great saint, were forced to obey. Simon fell a great distance and was killed, which decisively proved the superiority of the Christian powers. This story is undoubtedly manufactured out of whole cloth, as it is only one out of many accounts concerning his death, few of which agree. As more and more evidence is being amassed to the effect that St. Peter was never in Rome, its last possible vestige of authenticity is rapidly being dissipated.



FROM THE *NUREMBERG CHRONICLE.*

THE DEATH OF SIMON THE MAGICIAN.

Simon Magus, having called upon the Spirits of the Air, is here shown being picked up by the demons. St. Peter demands that the evil genii release their hold upon the magician. The demons are forced to comply and Simon Magus is killed by the fall.

That Simon was a philosopher there is no doubt, for wherever his exact words are preserved his synthetic and transcending thoughts are beautifully expressed. The principles of Gnosticism are well described in the following verbatim

statement by him, supposed to have been preserved by Hippolytus: “To you, therefore, I say what I say, and write what I write. And the writing is this. Of the universal Æons [periods, planes, or cycles of creative and created life in substance and space, celestial creatures] there are two shoots, without beginning or end, springing from one Root, which is the power invisible, inapprehensible silence [Bythos]. Of these shoots one is manifested from above, which is the Great Power, the Universal Mind ordering all things, male, and the other, [is manifested] from below, the Great Thought, female, producing all things. Hence pairing with each other, they unite and manifest the Middle Distance, incomprehensible Air, without beginning or end. In this is the Father Who sustains all things, and nourishes those things which have a beginning and end.” (See *Simon Magus*, by G.R.S. Mead.) By this we are to understand that manifestation is the result of a positive and a negative principle, one acting upon the other, and it takes place in the middle plane, or point of equilibrium, called the *pleroma*. This *pleroma* is a peculiar substance produced out of the blending of the spiritual and material æons. Out of the *pleroma* was individualized the *Demiurgus*, the immortal mortal, to whom we are responsible for our physical existence and the suffering we must go through in connection with it. In the Gnostic system, three pairs of opposites, called *Syzygies*, emanated from the Eternal One. These, with Himself, make the total of seven. The six (three pairs) Æons (living, divine principles) were described by Simon in the *Philosophumena* in the following manner: The first two were *Mind* (Nous) and *Thought* (Epinoia). Then came *Voice* (Phone) and its opposite, *Name* (Onoma), and lastly, *Reason* (Logismos) and *Reflection* (Enthumesis). From these primordial six, united with the *Eternal Flame*, came forth the Æons (Angels) who formed the lower worlds through the direction of the Demiurgus. (See the works of H. P. Blavatsky.) How this first Gnosticism of Simon Magus and Menander, his disciple, was amplified, and frequently distorted, by later adherents to the cult must now be considered.

The School of Gnosticism was divided into two major parts, commonly called the Syrian Cult and the Alexandrian Cult. These schools agreed in essentials, but the latter division was more inclined to be pantheistic, while the former was dualistic. While the Syrian cult was largely Simonian, the Alexandrian School was the outgrowth of the philosophical deductions of a clever Egyptian Christian, Basilides by name, who claimed to have received his instructions from the Apostle Matthew. Like Simon Magus, he was an emana-tionist, with Neo-Platonic inclinations. In fact, the entire Gnostic Mystery is based upon the hypothesis of emanations as being the logical connection between the

irreconcilable opposites Absolute Spirit and Absolute Substance, which the Gnostics believed to have been coexistent in Eternity. Some assert that Basilides was the true founder of Gnosticism, but there is much evidence to the effect that Simon Magus laid down its fundamental principles in the preceding century.

The Alexandrian Basilides inculcated Egyptian Hermeticism, Oriental occultism, Chaldean astrology, and Persian philosophy in his followers, and in his doctrines sought to unite the schools of early Christianity with the ancient pagan Mysteries. To him is attributed the formulation of that peculiar concept of the Deity which carries the name of *Abraxas.* In discussing the original meaning of this word, Godfrey Higgins, in his *Celtic Druids,* has demonstrated that the numerological powers of the letters forming the word *Abraxas* when added together result in the sum of 365. The same author also notes that the name *Mithras* when treated in a similar manner has the same numerical value. Basilides taught that the powers of the universe were divided into 365 *Æ*ons, or spiritual cycles, and that the sum of all these together was the Supreme Father, and to Him he gave the Qabbalistical appellation *Abraxas,* as being symbolical, numerologically, of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations. Abraxas is usually symbolized as a composite creature, with the body of a human being and the head of a rooster, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Remains,* gives the following concise description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian bishop and martyr, St. Irenaeus: “He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind; this the Logos, Word; this again Phronesis, Intelligence; from Phronesis sprung Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength.”

In describing Abraxas, C. W. King says: “Bellermann considers the composite image, inscribed with the actual name Abraxas, to be a Gnostic Pantheos, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five Emanations marked out by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the usual form assigned to the Deity, spring the two supporters, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quickening understanding; on which account the Greeks had made the serpent the attribute of Pallas. His head—that of a cock—represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of foresight and of vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis: the shield of Wisdom and the whip of Power.”

The Gnostics were divided in their opinions concerning the Dermiurgus, or creator of the lower worlds. He established the terrestrial universe with the aid of

six sons, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which He formed out of, and yet within, Himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest creation out of the substance called *pleroma*. One group of the Gnostics was of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by building this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by encasing them in mortal vehicles. The other sect viewed the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the dictates of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, *Jehovah,* was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced mediæval Rosicrucianism, which viewed Jehovah as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. Mythology abounds with the stories of gods who partook of both celestial and terrestrial natures. Odin, of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity subject to mortality, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity.

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This order claimed to be the only sect to have actual pictures of the Divine Syrian. While these were, in all probability, idealistic conceptions of the Savior based upon existing sculpturings and paintings of the pagan sun gods, they were all Christianity had. To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of Nous, the Divine Mind, and emanated from the higher spiritual *Æons*. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and left it again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine *Nous* could not suffer death, but that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered his life instead and that the *Nous*, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenæus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ: “When the uncreated, unnamed Father saw the corruption of mankind, He sent His firstborn, Nous, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in Him, out of the power of those that have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles.” (See King’s *Gnostics and Their Remains.)*

The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as savages, worshiped only the visible Nature; those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus; and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped *Nous* (Christ) and the true spiritual light of the higher *Æons*.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic

philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the *Virgin Sophia*, or Wisdom. In the *Books of the Savior*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Pistis Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of Æons and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning scientific subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshipers), and the Adamites. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to resurrect the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of their records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism.

The Mysteries of Asar-Hapi

The identity of the Greco-Egyptian Serapis (known to the Greeks as *Serapis* and the Egyptians as *Asar-Hapi*) is shrouded by an impenetrable veil of mystery. While this deity was a familiar figure among the symbols of the secret Egyptian initiatory rites, his arcane nature was revealed only to those who had fulfilled the requirements of the Serapic cultus. Therefore, in all probability, excepting the initiated priests, the Egyptians themselves were ignorant of his true character. So far as known, there exists no authentic account of the rites of Serapis, but an analysis of the deity and his accompanying symbols reveals their salient points. In an oracle delivered to the King of Cyprus, Serapis described himself thus:

> "A god I am such as I show to thee,
> The Starry Heavens are my head, my trunk the sea,
> Earth forms my feet, mine ears the air supplies,
> The Sun's far-darting, brilliant rays, mine eyes."

Several unsatisfactory attempts have been made to etymologize the word *Serapis.* Godfrey Higgins notes that *Soros* was the name given by the Egyptians to a stone coffin, and *Apis* was Osiris incarnate in the sacred bull. These two words combined result in *Soros-Apis* or *Sor-Apis*, "the tomb of the bull." But it is improbable that the Egyptians would worship a coffin in the form of a man.

Several ancient authors, including Macrobius, have affirmed that Serapis was a name for the Sun, because his image so often had a halo of light about its head. In his *Oration Upon the Sovereign Sun*, Julian speaks of the deity in these words: "One Jove, one Pluto, one Sun is Serapis." In Hebrew, Serapis is *Saraph*, meaning "to blaze out" or "to blaze up." For this reason the Jews designated one of their hierarchies of spiritual beings, *Seraphim.*

The most common theory, however, regarding the origin of the name *Serapis* is that which traces its derivation from the compound *Osiris-Apis*. At one time the Egyptians believed that the dead were absorbed into the nature of Osiris, the god of the dead. While marked similarity exists between Osiris-Apis and

Serapis, the theory advanced by Egyptologists that Serapis is merely a name given to the dead Apis, or sacred bull of Egypt, is untenable in view of the transcendent wisdom possessed by the Egyptian priestcraft, who, in all probability, used the god to symbolize the soul of the world (*anima mundi*). The material body of Nature was called *Apis;* the soul which escaped from the body at death but was enmeshed with the form during physical life was designated *Serapis.*

C. W. King believes Serapis to be a deity of Brahmanic extraction, his name being the Grecianized form of *Ser-adah* or *Sri-pa*, two titles ascribed to *Yama*, the Hindu god of death. This appears reasonable, especially since there is a legend to the effect that Serapis, in the form of a bull, was driven by Bacchus from India to Egypt. The priority of the Hindu Mysteries would further substantiate such a theory.

Among other meanings suggested for the word *Serapis* are: “The Sacred Bull,” “The Sun in Taurus,” “The Soul of Osiris,” “The Sacred Serpent,” and “The Retiring of the Bull.” The last appellation has reference to the ceremony of drowning the sacred Apis in the waters of the Nile every twenty-five years.

There is considerable evidence that the famous statue of Serapis in the Serapeum at Alexandria was originally worshiped under another name at Sinope, from which it was brought to Alexandria. There is also a legend which tells that Serapis was a very early king of the Egyptians, to whom they owed the foundation of their philosophical and scientific power. After his death this king was elevated to the estate of a god. Phylarchus declared that the word *Serapis* means “the power that disposed the universe into its present beautiful order.”

In his *Isis* and *Osiris*, Plutarch gives the following account of the origin of the magnificent statue of Serapis which stood in the Serapeum at Alexandria:

THE ALEXANDRIAN SERAPIS.

Serapis is often shown standing on the back of the sacred crocodile, carrying in his left hand a rule with which to measure the inundations of the Nile, and balancing with his right hand a curious emblem consisting of an animal with three heads. The first head—that of a lion—signified the present; the second head—that of a wolf—the past; and the third head—that of a dog—the future. The body with its three heads was enveloped by the twisted coils of a serpent. Figures of Serapis are occasionally accompanied by Cerberus, the three-headed dog of Pluto, and—like Jupiter—carry baskets of grain upon their heads.

While he was Pharaoh of Egypt, Ptolemy Soter had a strange dream in which he beheld a tremendous statue, which came to life and ordered the Pharaoh to bring it to Alexandria with all possible speed. Ptolemy Soter, not knowing the whereabouts of the statue, was sorely perplexed as to how he could discover it. While the Pharaoh was relating his dream, a great traveler by the name of Sosibius, coming forward, declared that he had seen such an image at Sinope. The Pharaoh immediately dispatched Soteles and Dionysius to negotiate for the removal of the figure to Alexandria. Three years elapsed before the image was finally obtained, the representatives of the Pharaoh finally stealing it and concealing the theft by spreading a story that the statue had come to life and, walking down the street leading from its temple, had boarded the ship prepared for its transportation to Alexandria. Upon its arrival in Egypt, the figure was brought into the presence of two Egyptian Initiates—the Eumolpid Timotheus and Manetho the Sebennite—who immediately pronounced it to be Serapis. The priests then declared that it was equipollent to Pluto. This was a masterly stroke, for in Serapis the Greeks and Egyptians found a deity in common and thus religious unity was consummated between the two nations.

Several figures of Serapis that stood in his various temples in Egypt and Rome have been described by early authors. Nearly all these showed Grecian rather than Egyptian influence. In some the body of the god was encircled by the coils of a great serpent. Others showed him as a composite of Osiris and Apis.

A description of the god that in all probability is reasonably accurate is that which represents him as a tall, powerful figure, conveying the twofold impression of manly strength and womanly grace. His face portrayed a deeply

pensive mood, the expression inclining toward sadness. His hair was long and arranged in a somewhat feminine manner, resting in curls upon his breast and shoulders. The face, save for its heavy beard, was also decidedly feminine. The figure of Serapis was usually robed from head to foot in heavy draperies, believed by initiates to conceal the fact that his body was androgynous.

Various substances were used in making the statues of Serapis. Some undoubtedly were carved from stone or marble by skilled craftsmen; others may have been cast from base or precious metals. One colossus of Serapis was composed of plates of various metals fitted together. In a labyrinth sacred to Serapis stood a thirteen-foot statue of him reputed to have been made from a single emerald. Modern writers, discussing this image, state that it was made of green glass poured into a mold. According to the Egyptians, however, it withstood all the tests of an actual emerald.

Clement of Alexandria describes a figure of Serapis compounded from the following elements: First, filings of gold, silver, lead, and tin; second, all manner of Egyptian stones, including sapphires, hematites, emeralds, and topazes; all these being ground down and mixed together with the coloring matter left over from the funeral of Osiris and Apis. The result was a rare and curious figure, indigo in color. Some of the statues of Serapis must have been formed of extremely hard substances, for when a Christian soldier, carrying out the edict of Theodosius, struck the Alexandrian Serapis with his ax, that instrument was shattered into fragments and sparks flew from it. It is also quite probable that Serapis was worshiped in the form of a serpent, in common with many of the higher deities of the Egyptian and Greek pantheons.

Serapis was called *Theon Heptagrammaton*, or the god with the name of seven letters. The name *Serapis* (like Abraxas and Mithras) contains seven letters. In their hymns to Serapis the priests chanted the seven vowels. Occasionally Serapis is depicted with horns or a coronet of seven rays. That evidently represented the seven divine intelligences manifesting through the solar light. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* notes that the earliest authentic mention of Serapis is in connection with the death of Alexander. Such was the prestige of Serapis that he alone of the gods was consulted in behalf of the dying king.

The Egyptian secret school of philosophy was divided into the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries, the former being sacred to Isis and the latter to Serapis and Osiris. Wilkinson is of the opinion that only the priests were permitted to enter the Greater Mysteries. Even the heir to the throne was not eligible until he had

been crowned Pharaoh, when, by virtue of his kingly office, he automatically became a priest and the temporal head of the state religion. (See Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Egyptians.)* A limited number were admitted into the Greater Mysteries: these preserved their secrets inviolate.

Much of the information concerning the rituals of the higher degrees of the Egyptian Mysteries has been gleaned from an examination of the chambers and passageways in which the initiations were given. Under the temple of Serapis destroyed by Theodosius were found strange mechanical contrivances constructed by the priests in the subterranean crypts and caverns where the nocturnal initiatory rites were celebrated. These machines indicate the severe tests of moral and physical courage undergone by the candidates. After passing through these tortuous ways, the neophytes who survived the ordeals were ushered into the presence of Serapis, a noble and awe-inspiring figure illumined by unseen lights.

Labyrinths were also a striking feature in connection with the Rite of Serapis, and E. A. Wallis Budge, in his *Gods of the Egyptians,* depicts Serapis (Minotaur-like) with the body of a man and the head of a bull. Labyrinths were symbolic of the involvements and illusions of the lower world through which wanders the soul of man in its search for truth. In the labyrinth dwells the lower animal man with the head of the bull, who seeks to destroy the soul entangled in the maze of worldly ignorance. In this relation Serapis becomes the Tryer or Adversary who tests the souls of those seeking union with the Immortals. The maze was also doubtless used to represent the solar system, the Bull-Man representing the sun dwelling in the mystic maze of its planets, moons, and asteroids.

The Gnostic Mysteries were acquainted with the arcane meaning of Serapis, and through the medium of Gnosticism this god became inextricably associated with early Christianity. In fact, the Emperor Hadrian, while traveling in Egypt in A.D. 134, declared in a letter to Servianus that the worshipers of Serapis were Christians and that the Bishops of the church also worshiped at his shrine. He even declared that the Patriarch himself, when in Egypt, was forced to adore Serapis as well as Christ. (See Parsons' *New Light on the Great Pyramid*.)

The little-suspected importance of Serapis as a prototype of Christ can be best appreciated after a consideration of the following extract from C. W. King's *Gnostics and Their Remains:* "There can be no doubt that the head of Serapis, marked as the face is by a grave and pensive majesty, supplied the first idea for the conventional portraits of the Saviour. The Jewish prejudices of the first converts were so powerful that we may be sure no attempt was made to depict

His countenance until some generations after all that had beheld it on earth had passed away."

Serapis gradually usurped the positions previously occupied by the other Egyptian and Greek gods, and became the supreme deity of both religions. His power continued until the fourth century of the Christian Era. In A.D. 385, Theodosius, that would-be exterminator of pagan philosophy, issued his memorable edict *De Idolo Serapidis Diruendo.* When the Christian soldiers, in obedience to this order, entered the Serapeum at Alexandria to destroy the image of Serapis which had stood there for centuries, so great was their veneration for the god that they dared not touch the image lest the ground should open at their feet and engulf them. At length, overcoming their fear, they demolished the statue, sacked the building, and finally as a fitting climax to their offense burned the magnificent library which was housed within the lofty apartments of the Serapeum. Several writers have recorded the remarkable fact that Christian symbols were found in the ruined foundations of this pagan temple. Socrates, a church historian of the fifth century, declared that after the pious Christians had razed the Serapeum at Alexandria and scattered the demons who dwelt there under the guise of gods, beneath the foundations was found the monogram of Christ!

Two quotations will further establish the relationship existing between the Mysteries of Serapis and those of other ancient peoples. The first is from Richard Payne Knight's *Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology:* "Hence Varro [in *De Lingua Latina*] says that Cœlum and Terra, that is universal mind and productive body, were the Great Gods of the Samothracian Mysteries; and the same as the Serapis and Isis of the later Ægyptians: the Taautos and Astarte of the Phœnicians, and the Saturn and Ops of the Latins." The second quotation is from Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma:* "'Thee,' says Martianus Capella, in his hymn to the Sun, 'dwellers on the Nile adore as Serapis, and Memphis worships as Osiris: in the sacred rites of Persia thou art Mithras, in Phrygia, Atys, and Libya bows down to thee as Ammon, and Phœnician Byblos as Adonis; thus the whole world adores thee under different names.'"

The Odinic Mysteries

The date of the founding of the Odinic Mysteries is uncertain, some writers declaring that they were established in the first century before Christ; others, the first century after Christ. Robert Macoy, 33°, gives the following description of their origin: “It appears from the northern chronicles that in the first century of the Christian Era, Sigge, the chief of the Aser, an Asiatic tribe, emigrated from the Caspian sea and the Caucasus into northern Europe. He directed his course northwesterly from the Black sea to Russia, over which, according to tradition, he placed one of his sons as a ruler, as he is said to have done over the Saxons and the Franks. He then advanced through Cimbria to Denmark, which acknowledged his fifth son Skiold as its sovereign, and passed over to Sweden, where Gylf, who did homage to the wonderful stranger, and was initiated into his mysteries, then ruled. He soon made himself master here, built Sigtuna as the capital of his empire, and promulgated a new code of laws, and established the sacred mysteries. He, himself, assumed the name of Odin, founded the priesthood of the twelve Drottars (Druids?) who conducted the secret worship, and the administration of justice, and, as prophets, revealed the future. The secret rites of these mysteries celebrated the death of Balder, the beautiful and lovely, and represented the grief of Gods and men at his death, and his restoration to life.” (*General History of Freemasonry*.)

After his death, the historical Odin was apotheosized, his identity being merged into that of the mythological Odin, god of wisdom, whose cult he had promulgated. Odinism then supplanted the worship of Thor, the thunderer, the supreme deity of the ancient Scandinavian pantheon. The mound where, according to legend, King Odin was buried is still to be seen near the site of his great temple at Upsala.

The twelve *Drottars* who presided over the Odinic Mysteries evidently personified the twelve holy and ineffable names of Odin. The rituals of the Odinic Mysteries were very similar to those of the Greeks, Persians, and Brahmins, after which they were patterned. The Drottars, who symbolized the signs of the zodiac, were the custodians of the arts and sciences, which they

revealed to those who passed successfully the ordeals of initiation. Like many other pagan cults, the Odinic Mysteries, as an institution, were destroyed by Christianity, but the underlying cause of their fall was the corruption of the priesthood.

Mythology is nearly always the ritual and the symbolism of a Mystery school. Briefly stated, the sacred drama which formed the basis of the Odinic Mysteries was as follows:

The Supreme, invisible Creator of all things was called All-Father. His regent in Nature was Odin, the one-eyed god. Like Quetzalcoatl, Odin was elevated to the dignity of the Supreme Deity. According to the Drottars, the universe was fashioned from the body of *Ymir,* the hoarfrost giant. Ymir was formed from the clouds of mist that rose from Ginnungagap, the great cleft in chaos into which the primordial frost giants and flame giants had hurled snow and fire. The three gods—Odin, Vili, and Ve—slew Ymir and from him formed the world. From Ymir's various members the different parts of Nature were fashioned.

After Odin had established order, he caused a wonderful palace, called Asgard, to be built on the top of a mountain, and here the twelve Æsir (gods) dwelt together, far above the limitations of mortal men. On this mountain also was Valhalla, the palace of the slain, where those who had heroically died fought and feasted day after day. Each night their wounds were healed and the boar whose flesh they ate renewed itself as rapidly as it was consumed.

Balder the Beautiful—the Scandinavian Christ—was the beloved son of Odin. Balder was not warlike; his kindly and beautiful spirit brought peace and joy to the hearts of the gods, and they all loved him save one. As Jesus had a Judas among His twelve disciples, so one of the twelve gods was false—Loki, the personification of evil. Loki caused Höthr, the blind god of fate, to shoot Balder with a mistletoe arrow. With the death of Balder, light and joy vanished from the lives of the other deities. Heartbroken, the gods gathered to find a method whereby they could resurrect this spirit of eternal life and youth. The result was the establishment of the Mysteries.

The Odinic Mysteries were given in underground crypts or caves, the chambers, nine in number, representing the Nine Worlds of the Mysteries. The candidate seeking admission was assigned the task of raising Balder from the dead. Although he did not realize it, he himself played the part of Balder. He called himself a wanderer; the caverns through which he passed were symbolic of the worlds and spheres of Nature. The priests who initiated him were

emblematic of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The three supreme initiators—the Sublime, the Equal to the Sublime, and the Highest—were analogous to the Worshipful Master and the Junior and Senior Wardens of a Masonic lodge.

After wandering for hours through the intricate passageways, the candidate was ushered into the presence of a statue of Balder the Beautiful, the prototype of all initiates into the Mysteries. This figure stood in the center of a great apartment roofed with shields. In the midst of the chamber stood a plant with seven blossoms, emblematic of the planets. In this room, which symbolized the home of the Æsir, or Wisdom, the neophyte took his oath of secrecy and piety upon the naked blade of a sword. He drank the sanctified mead from a bowl made of a human skull and, having passed successfully through all the tortures and trials designed to divert him from the course of wisdom, he was finally permitted to unveil the mystery of Odin—the personification of wisdom. He was presented, in the name of Balder, with the sacred ring of the order; he was hailed as a man reborn; and it was said of him that he had died and had been raised again without passing through the gates of death.

Richard Wagner's immortal composition, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, is based upon the Mystery rituals of the Odinic cult. While the great composer took many liberties with the original story, the Ring Operas, declared to be the grandest tetralogy of music dramas the world possesses, have caught and preserved in a remarkable manner the majesty and power of the original sagas. Beginning with *Das Rheingold*, the action proceeds through *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* to an awe-inspiring climax in *Götterdämmerung*, "The Twilight of the Gods."

IV

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies

PART III

The most famous of the ancient religious Mysteries were the Eleusinian, whose rites were celebrated every five years in the city of Eleusis to honor Ceres (Demeter, Rhea, or Isis) and her daughter, Persephone. The initiates of the Eleusinian School were famous throughout Greece for the beauty of their philosophic concepts and the high standards of morality which they demonstrated in their daily lives. Because of their excellence, these Mysteries spread to Rome and Britain, and later the initiations were given in both these countries. The Eleusinian Mysteries, named for the community in Attica where the sacred dramas were first presented, are generally believed to have been founded by Eumolpos about fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, and through the Platonic system of philosophy their principles have been preserved to modern times.

The rites of Eleusis, with their mystic interpretations of Nature's most precious secrets, overshadowed the civilizations of their time and gradually absorbed many smaller schools, incorporating into their own system whatever valuable information these lesser institutions possessed. Heckethorn sees in the Mysteries of Ceres and Bacchus a metamorphosis of the rites of Isis and Osiris, and there is every reason to believe that all so-called secret schools of the ancient world were branches from one philosophic tree which, with its root in heaven and its branches on the earth, is—like the spirit of man—an invisible but ever-present cause of the objectified vehicles that give it expression. The Mysteries were the channels through which this one philosophic light was disseminated; and their initiates, resplendent with intellectual and spiritual understanding, were the perfect fruitage of the divine tree, bearing witness before the material world of the recondite source of all Light and Truth.

The rites of Eleusis were divided into what were called the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries. According to James Gardner, the Lesser Mysteries were celebrated in the spring (probably at the time of the vernal equinox) in the town of Agræ, and the Greater, in the fall (the time of the autumnal equinox) at Eleusis or Athens. It is supposed that the former were given annually and the latter every five years. The rituals of the Eleusinians were highly involved, and to understand them required a deep study of Greek mythology, which they interpreted in its esoteric light with the aid of their secret keys.

The Lesser Mysteries were dedicated to Persephone. In his *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, Thomas Taylor sums up their purpose as follows: “The Lesser Mysteries were designed by the ancient theologists, their founders, to signify occultly the condition of the unpurified soul invested with an earthy body, and enveloped in a material and physical nature.”

The legend used in the Lesser rites is that of the abduction of the goddess Persephone, the daughter of Ceres, by Pluto, the lord of the underworld, or Hades. While Persephone is picking flowers in a beautiful meadow, the earth suddenly opens and the gloomy lord of death, riding in a magnificent chariot, emerges from its somber depths and, grasping her in his arms, carries the screaming and struggling goddess to his subterranean palace, where he forces her to become his queen.

It is doubtful whether many of the initiates themselves understood the mystic meaning of this allegory, for most of them apparently believed that it referred solely to the succession of the seasons. It is difficult to obtain satisfactory information concerning the Mysteries, for the candidates were bound by inviolable oaths never to reveal their inner secrets to the profane. At the beginning of the ceremony of initiation, the candidate stood upon the skins of animals sacrificed for the purpose, and vowed that death should seal his lips before he would divulge the sacred truths which were about to be communicated to him. Through indirect channels, however, some of their secrets have been preserved. The teachings given to the neophytes were substantially as follows:

The soul of man—often called *Psyche*, and in the Eleusinian Mysteries symbolized by Persephone—is essentially a spiritual thing. Its true home is in the higher worlds, where, free from the bondage of material form and material concepts, it is said to be truly alive and self-expressive. The human, or physical, nature of man, according to this doctrine, is a tomb, a quagmire, a false and impermanent thing, the source of all sorrow and suffering. Plato describes the body as the sepulcher of the soul; and by this he means not only the human form but also the human nature.

The gloom and depression of the Lesser Mysteries represented the agony of the spiritual soul unable to express itself because it has accepted the limitations and illusions of the human environment. The crux of the Eleusinian argument was that man is neither better nor wiser after death than during life. If he does not rise above ignorance during his sojourn here, man goes at death into eternity to wander about forever, making the same mistakes which he made here. If he does not outgrow the desire for material possessions here, he will carry it with

him into the invisible world, where, because he can never gratify the desire, he will continue in endless agony. Dante's *Inferno* is symbolically descriptive of the sufferings of those who never freed their spiritual natures from the cravings, habits, viewpoints, and limitations of their Plutonic personalities. Those who made no endeavor to improve themselves (whose souls have slept) during their physical lives, passed at death into Hades, where, lying in rows, they slept through all eternity as they had slept through life.

To the Eleusinian philosophers, birth into the physical world was death in the fullest sense of the word, and the only true birth was that of the spiritual soul of man rising out of the womb of his own fleshly nature. "The soul is dead that slumbers," says Longfellow, and in this he strikes the keynote of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Just as Narcissus, gazing at himself in the water (the ancients used this mobile element to symbolize the transitory, illusionary, material universe) lost his life trying to embrace a reflection, so man, gazing into the mirror of Nature and accepting as his real self the senseless clay that he sees reflected, loses the opportunity afforded by physical life to unfold his immortal, invisible Self.

An ancient initiate once said that the living are ruled by the dead. Only those conversant with the Eleusinian concept of life could understand that statement. It means that the majority of people are not ruled by their living spirits but by their senseless (hence dead) animal personalities. Transmigration and reincarnation were taught in these Mysteries, but in a somewhat unusual manner. It was believed that at midnight the invisible worlds were closest to the terrestrial sphere and that souls coming into material existence slipped in during the midnight hour. For this reason many of the Eleusinian ceremonies were performed at midnight. Some of those sleeping spirits who had failed to awaken their higher natures during the earth life and who now floated around in the invisible worlds, surrounded by a darkness of their own making, occasionally slipped through at this hour and assumed the forms of various creatures.

The mystics of Eleusis also laid stress upon the evil of suicide, explaining that there was a profound mystery concerning this crime of which they could not speak, but warning their disciples that a great sorrow comes to all who take their own lives. This, in substance, constitutes the esoteric doctrine given to the initiates of the Lesser Mysteries. As the degree dealt largely with the miseries of those who failed to make the best use of their philosophic opportunities, the chambers of initiation were subterranean and the horrors of Hades were vividly depicted in a complicated ritualistic drama. After passing successfully through

the tortuous passageways, with their trials and dangers, the candidate received the honorary title of *Mystes.* This meant one who saw through a veil or had a clouded vision. It also signified that the candidate had been brought up to the veil, which would be torn away in the higher degree. The modern word *mystic,* as referring to a seeker after truth according to the dictates of the heart along the path of faith, is probably derived from this ancient word, for faith is belief in the reality of things unseen or veiled.

The Greater Mysteries (into which the candidate was admitted only after he had successfully passed through the ordeals of the Lesser, and not always then) were sacred to Ceres, the mother of Persephone, and represent her as wandering through the world in quest of her abducted daughter. Ceres carried two torches, intuition and reason, to aid her in the search for her lost child (the soul). At last she found Persephone not far from Eleusis, and out of gratitude taught the people there to cultivate corn, which is sacred to her. She also founded the Mysteries. Ceres appeared before Pluto, god of the souls of the dead, and pleaded with him to allow Persephone to return to her home. This the god at first refused to do, because Persephone had eaten of the pomegranate, the fruit of mortality. At last, however, he compromised and agreed to permit Persephone to live in the upper world half of the year if she would stay with him in the darkness of Hades for the remaining half.

The Greeks believed that Persephone was a manifestation of the solar energy, which in the winter months lived under the earth with Pluto, but in the summer returned again with the goddess of productiveness. There is a legend that the flowers loved Persephone and that every year when she left for the dark realms of Pluto, the plants and shrubs would die of grief. While the profane and uninitiated had their own opinions on these subjects, the truths of the Greek allegories remained safely concealed by the priests, who alone recognized the sublimity of these great philosophic and religious parables.

Thomas Taylor epitomizes the doctrines of the Greater Mysteries in the following statement: “The Greater (Mysteries) obscurely intimated, by mystic and splendid visions, the felicity of the soul both here and hereafter when purified from the defilement of a material nature, and constantly elevated to the realities of intellectual (spiritual) vision.”

Just as the Lesser Mysteries discussed the prenatal epoch of man when the consciousness in its nine days (embry-ologically, months) was descending into the realm of illusion and assuming the veil of unreality, so the Greater Mysteries discussed the principles of spiritual regeneration and revealed to initiates not

only the simplest but also the most direct and complete method of liberating their higher natures from the bondage of material ignorance. Like Prometheus chained to the top of Mount Caucasus, man's higher nature is chained to his inadequate personality. The nine days of initiation were also symbolic of the nine spheres through which the human soul descends during the process of assuming a terrestrial form. The secret exercises for spiritual unfoldment given to disciples of the higher degrees are unknown, but there is every reason to believe that they were similar to the Brahmanic Mysteries, since it is known that the Eleusinian ceremonies were closed with the Sanskrit words "Konx Om Pax."

FROM A MURAL PAINTING IN POMPEII.

CERES, THE PATRON OF THE MYSTERIES.

Ceres, or Demeter, was the daughter of Kronos and Rhea, and by Zeus the mother of Persephone. Some believe her to be the goddess of the earth, but more correctly she is the deity protecting agriculture in general and com in particular. The poppy is sacred to Ceres and she is often shown carrying or ornamented by a garland of these Hewers. In the Mysteries, Ceres is represented riding in a chariot drawn by winged serpents.

That part of the allegory referring to the two six-month periods during one of which Peresphone must remain with Pluto, while during the other she may revisit the upper world, offers material for deep consideration. It is probable that the Eleusinians realized that the soul left the body during sleep, or at least was made capable of leaving by the special training which undoubtedly they were in a position to give. Thus Persephone would remain as the queen of Pluto's realm during the waking hours, but would ascend to the spiritual worlds during the periods of sleep. The initiate was taught how to intercede with Pluto to permit Persephone (the initiate's soul) to ascend from the darkness of his material nature into the light of understanding. When thus freed from the shackles of clay and crystallized concepts, the initiate was liberated not only for the period of his life but for all eternity, for never thereafter was he divested of those soul qualities which after death were his vehicles for manifestation and expression in the so-called heaven world.

In contrast to the idea of Hades as a state of darkness below, the gods were said to inhabit the tops of mountains, a well-known example being Mount Olympus, where the twelve deities of the Greek pantheon were said to dwell together. In his initiatory wanderings the neophyte therefore entered chambers of ever-increasing brilliancy to portray the ascent of the spirit from the lower worlds into the realms of bliss. As the climax to such wanderings he entered a great vaulted room, in the center of which stood a brilliantly illumined statue of the goddess Ceres. Here, in the presence of the hierophant and surrounded by priests in magnificent robes, he was instructed in the highest of the secret mysteries of the Eleusis. At the conclusion of this ceremony he was hailed as an *Epoptes*, which means one who has beheld or seen directly. For this reason also initiation was termed *autopsy*. The Epoptes was then given certain sacred books, probably written in cipher, together with tablets of stone on which secret instructions were engraved.

In *The Obelisk in Freemasonry*, John A. Weisse describes the officiating personages of the Eleusinian Mysteries as consisting of a male and a female hierophant who directed the initiations; a male and a female torchbearer; a male herald; and a male and a female altar attendant. There were also numerous minor officials. He states that, according to Porphyry, the hierophant represents Plato's *Demiurgus*, or Creator of the world; the torch bearer, the Sun; the altar man, the Moon; the herald, Hermes, or Mercury; and the other officials, minor stars.

From the records available, a number of strange and apparently supernatural phenomena accompanied the rituals. Many initiates claim to have actually seen

the living gods themselves. Whether this was the result of religious ecstasy or the actual cooperation of invisible powers with the visible priests must remain a mystery. In *The Metamorphosis, or Golden Ass*, Apuleius thus describes what in all probability is his initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries:

"I approached to the confines of death, and having trod on the threshold of Proserpine I returned from it, being carried through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining with a splendid light; and I manifestly drew near to the gods beneath, and the gods above, and proximately adored them."

Women and children were admitted to the Eleusinian Mysteries, and at one time there were literally thousands of initiates. Because this vast host was not prepared for the highest spiritual and mystical doctrines, a division necessarily took place within the society itself. The higher teachings were given to only a limited number of initiates who, because of superior mentality, showed a comprehensive grasp of their underlying philosophical concepts. Socrates refused to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, for knowing its principles without being a member of the order he realized that membership would seal his tongue. That the Mysteries of Eleusis were based upon great and eternal truths is attested by the veneration in which they were held by the great minds of the ancient world. M. Ouvaroff asks, "Would Pindar, Plato, Cicero, Epictetus, have spoken of them with such admiration, if the hierophant had satisfied himself with loudly proclaiming his own opinions, or those of his order?"

The garments in which candidates were initiated were preserved for many years and were believed to possess almost sacred properties. Just as the soul can have no covering save wisdom and virtue, so the candidates—being as yet without true knowledge—were presented to the Mysteries unclothed, being first given the skin of an animal and later a consecrated robe to symbolize the philosophical teachings received by the initiate. During the course of initiation the candidate passed through two gates. The first led downward into the lower worlds and symbolized his birth into ignorance. The second led upward into a room brilliantly lighted by unseen lamps, in which was the statue of Ceres and which symbolized the upper world, or the abode of Light and Truth. Strabo states that the great temple of Eleusis would hold between twenty and thirty thousand people. The caves dedicated by Zarathustra also had these two doors, symbolizing the avenues of birth and death.

The following paragraph from Porphyry gives a fairly adequate conception of Eleusinian symbolism: "God being a luminous principle, residing in the midst of the most subtile fire, he remains for ever invisible to the eyes of those who do

not elevate themselves above material life: on this account, the sight of transparent bodies, such as crystal, Parian marble, and even ivory, recalls the idea of divine light; as the sight of gold excites an idea of its purity, for gold cannot be sullied. Some have thought by a black stone was signified the invisibility of the divine essence. To express supreme reason, the Divinity was represented under the human form—and beautiful, for God is the source of beauty; of different ages, and in various attitudes, sitting or upright; of one or the other sex, as a virgin or a young man, a husband or a bride, that all the shades and gradations might be marked. Every thing luminous was subsequently attributed to the gods; the sphere, and all that is spherical, to the universe, to the sun and the moon—sometimes to Fortune and to Hope. The circle, and all circular figures, to eternity—to the celestial movements, to the circles and zones of the heavens. The section of circles, to the phases of the moon; and pyramids and obelisks, to the igneous principle, and through that to the gods of Heaven. A cone expresses the sun; a cylinder the earth; the phallus and triangle (a symbol of the matrix) designate generation." (From *Essay on the Mysteries of Eleusis* by M. Ouvaroff.)

The Eleusinian Mysteries, according to Heckethorn, survived all others and did not cease to exist as an institution until nearly four hundred years after Christ, when they were finally suppressed by Theodosius (styled the *Great),* who cruelly destroyed all who did not accept the Christian faith. Of this greatest of all philosophical institutions Cicero said that it taught men not only how to live but also how to die.

The Orphic Mysteries

Orpheus, the Thracian bard, the great initiator of the Greeks, ceased to be known as a man and was celebrated as a divinity several centuries before the Christian Era. “As to Orpheus himself *,” writes Thomas Taylor, “scarcely a vestige of his life is to be found amongst the immense ruins of time. For who has ever been able to affirm any thing with certainty of his origin, his age, his country, and condition? This alone may be depended on, from general assent, that there formerly lived a person named Orpheus, who was the founder of theology among the Greeks; the institutor of their lives and morals; the first of prophets, and the prince of poets; himself the offspring of a Muse; who taught the Greeks their sacred rites and mysteries, and from whose wisdom, as from a perennial and abundant fountain, the divine muse of Homer and the sublime theology of Pythagoras and Plato flowed.” (See *The Mystical Hymns of Orpheus*.)

Orpheus was founder of the Grecian mythological system which he used as the medium for the promulgation of his philosophical doctrines. The origin of his philosophy is uncertain. He may have got it from the Brahmins, there being legends to the effect that he was a Hindu, his name possibly being derived from ρφναος, meaning “dark.” Orpheus was initiated into the Egyptian Mysteries, from which he secured extensive knowledge of magic, astrology, sorcery, and medicine. The Mysteries of the Cabiri at Samothrace were also conferred upon him, and these undoubtedly contributed to his knowledge of medicine and music.

The romance of Orpheus and Eurydice is one of the tragic episodes of Greek mythology and apparently constitutes the outstanding feature of the Orphic Rite. Eurydice, in her attempt to escape from a villain seeking to seduce her, died from the venom of a poisonous serpent which stung her in the heel. Orpheus, penetrating to the very heart of the underworld, so charmed Pluto and Persephone with the beauty of his music that they agreed to permit Eurydice to return to life if Orpheus could lead her back to the sphere of the living without once looking round to see if she were following. So great was his fear, however, that she would stray from him that he turned his head, and Eurydice with a

heartbroken cry was swept back into the land of death.

Orpheus wandered the earth for a while disconsolate, and there are several conflicting accounts of the manner of his death. Some declare that he was slain by a bolt of lightning; others, that failing to save his beloved Eurydice, he committed suicide. The generally accepted version of his death, however, is that he was torn to pieces by Ciconian women whose advances he had spurned. In the tenth book of Plato's *Republic* it is declared that, because of his sad fate at the hands of women, the soul that had once been Orpheus, upon being destined to live again in the physical world, chose rather to return in the body of a swan than be born of woman. The head of Orpheus, after being torn from his body, was cast with his lyre into the river Hebrus, down which it floated to the sea, where, wedging in a cleft in a rock, it gave oracles for many years. The lyre, after being stolen from its shrine and working the destruction of the thief, was picked up by the gods and fashioned into a constellation.

Orpheus has long been sung as the patron of music. On his seven-stringed lyre he played such perfect harmonies that the gods themselves were moved to acclaim his power. When he touched the strings of his instrument the birds and beasts gathered about him, and as he wandered through the forests his enchanting melodies caused even the ancient trees with mighty effort to draw their gnarled roots from out the earth and follow him. Orpheus is one of the many Immortals who have sacrificed themselves that mankind might have the wisdom of the gods. By the symbolism of his music he communicated the divine secrets to humanity, and several authors have declared that the gods, though loving him, feared that he would overthrow their kingdom and therefore reluctantly encompassed his destruction.

As time passed on the historical Orpheus became hopelessly confounded with the doctrine he represented and eventually became the symbol of the Greek school of the ancient wisdom. Thus Orpheus was declared to be the son of Apollo, the divine and perfect truth, and Calliope, the Muse of harmony and rhythm. In other words, Orpheus is the secret doctrine (Apollo) revealed through music (Calliope). Eurydice is humanity dead from the sting of the serpent of false knowledge and imprisoned in the underworld of ignorance. In this allegory Orpheus signifies theology, which wins her from the king of the dead but fails to accomplish her resurrection because it falsely estimates and mistrusts the innate understanding within the human soul. The Ciconian women who tore Orpheus limb from limb symbolize the various contending theological factions which destroy the body of Truth. They cannot accomplish this, however, until their

discordant cries drown out the harmony drawn by Orpheus from his magic lyre. The head of Orpheus signifies the esoteric doctrines of his cult. These doctrines continue to live and speak even after his body (the cult) has been destroyed. The lyre is the secret teaching of Orpheus; the seven strings are the seven divine truths which are the keys to universal knowledge. The differing accounts of his death represent the various means used to destroy the secret teachings: wisdom can die in many ways at the same time. The allegory of Orpheus incarnating in the white swan merely signifies that the spiritual truths he promulgated will continue and will be taught by the illumined initiates of all future ages. The swan is the symbol of the initiates of the Mysteries; it is a symbol also of the divine power which is the progenitor of the world.

The Bacchic and Dionysiac Rites

The Bacchic Rite centers around the allegory of the youthful Bacchus (Dionysos or Zagreus) being torn to pieces by the Titans. These giants accomplished the destruction of Bacchus by causing him to become fascinated by his own image in a mirror. After dismembering him, the Titans first boiled the pieces in water and afterwards roasted them. Pallas rescued the heart of the murdered god, and by this precaution Bacchus (Dionysos) was enabled to spring forth again in all his former glory. Jupiter, the Demiurgus, beholding the crime of the Titans, hurled his thunderbolts and slew them, burning their bodies to ashes with heavenly fire. Out of the ashes of the Titans—which also contained a portion of the flesh of Bacchus, whose body they had partly devoured—the human race was created. Thus the mundane life of every man was said to contain a portion of the Bacchic life.

For this reason the Greek Mysteries warned against suicide. He who attempts to destroy himself raises his hand against the nature of Bacchus within him, since man's body is indirectly the tomb of this god and consequently must be preserved with the greatest care.

Bacchus (Dionysos) represents the rational soul of the inferior world. He is the chief of the Titans—the artificers of the mundane spheres. The Pythagoreans called him the *Titanic monad.* Thus Bacchus is the all-inclusive *idea* of the Titanic sphere and the Titans—or *gods of the fragments*—the active agencies by means of which universal substance is fashioned into the pattern of this idea. The Bacchic state signifies the unity of the rational soul in a state of self-knowledge, and the Titanic state the diversity of the rational soul which, being scattered throughout creation, loses the consciousness of its own essential one-ness. The mirror into which Bacchus gazes and which is the cause of his fall is the great sea of Illusion—the lower world fashioned by the Titans. Bacchus (the mundane rational soul), seeing his image before him, accepts the image as a likeness of himself and ensouls the likeness; that is, the rational idea ensouls its reflection—the irrational universe. By ensouling the irrational image it implants in it the urge to become like its source, the rational image. Therefore the ancients said that

man does not know the gods by logic or by reason but rather by realizing the presence of the gods within himself.

After Bacchus gazed into the mirror and followed his own reflection into matter, the rational soul of the world was broken up and distributed by the Titans throughout the mundane sphere of which it is the essential nature, but the heart, or source, of it they could not scatter. The Titans took the dismembered body of Bacchus and boiled it in water—symbol of immersion in the material universe—which represents the incorporation of the Bacchic principle in form. The pieces were afterwards roasted to signify the subsequent ascension of the spiritual nature out of form.

When Jupiter, the father of Bacchus and the Demiurgus of the universe, saw that the Titans were hopelessly involving the rational or divine idea by scattering its members through the constituent parts of the lower world, he slew the Titans in order that the divine idea might not be entirely lost. From the ashes of the Titans he formed mankind, whose purpose of existence was to preserve and eventually to release the Bacchic idea, or rational soul, from the Titanic fabrication. Jupiter, being the Demiurgus and fabricator of the material universe, is the third person of the Creative Triad, consequently the Lord of Death, for death exists only in the lower sphere of being over which he presides. Disintegration takes place so that reintegration may follow upon a higher level of form or intelligence. The thunderbolts of Jupiter are emblematic of his disintegrative power; they reveal the purpose of death, which is to rescue the rational soul from the devouring power of the irrational nature.

Man is a composite creature, his lower nature consisting of the fragments of the Titans and his higher nature the sacred, immortal flesh (life) of Bacchus. Therefore man is capable of either a Titanic (irrational) or a Bacchic (rational) existence. The Titans of Hesiod, who were twelve in number, are probably analogous to the celestial zodiac, whereas the Titans who murdered and dismembered Bacchus represent the zodiacal powers distorted by their involvement in the material world. Thus Bacchus represents the sun who is dismembered by the signs of the zodiac and from whose body the universe is formed. When the terrestrial forms were created from the various parts of his body the sense of wholeness was lost and the sense of separateness established. The heart of Bacchus, which was saved by Pallas, or Minerva, was lifted out of the four elements symbolized by his dismembered body and placed in the ether. The heart of Bacchus is the immortal center of the rational soul.

After the rational soul had been distributed throughout creation and the nature

of man, the Bacchic Mysteries were instituted for the purpose of disentangling it from the irrational Titanic nature. This disentanglement was the process of lifting the soul out of the state of separateness into that of unity. The various parts and members of Bacchus were collected from the different corners of the earth. When all the rational parts are gathered Bacchus is resurrected.

The Rites of Dionysos were very similar to those of Bacchus, and by many these two gods are considered as one. Statues of Dionysos were carried in the Eleusinian Mysteries, especially the lesser degrees. Bacchus, representing the soul of the mundane sphere, was capable of an infinite multiplicity of form and designations. Dionysos apparently was his solar aspect.

The Dionysiac Architects constituted an ancient secret society, in principles and doctrines much like the modern Freemasonic Order. They were an organization of builders bound together by their secret knowledge of the relationship between the earthly and the divine sciences of architectonics. They were supposedly employed by King Solomon in the building of his Temple, although they were not Jews, nor did they worship the God of the Jews, being followers of Bacchus and Dionysos. The Dionysiac Architects erected many of the great monuments of antiquity. They possessed a secret language and a system of marking their stones. They had annual convocations and sacred feasts. The exact nature of their doctrines is unknown. It is believed that CHiram Abiff was an initiate of this society.

V

Atlantis and the Gods of Antiquity

Atlantis is the subject of a short but important article appearing in the *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of The Smithsonian Institution for the year ending June 30th, 1915*. The author, M. Pierre Termier, a member of the Academy of Sciences and Director of Service of the Geologic Chart of France, in 1912 delivered a lecture on the Atlantean hypothesis before the Institut Océanographique; it is the translated notes of this remarkable lecture that are published in the Smithsonian report.

"After a long period of disdainful indifference," writes M. Termier, "observe how in the last few years science is returning to the study of Atlantis. How many naturalists, geologists, zoologists, or botanists are asking one another today whether Plato has not transmitted to us, with slight amplification, a page from the actual history of mankind. No affirmation is yet permissible; but it seems more and more evident that a vast region, continental or made up of great islands, has collapsed west of the Pillars of Hercules, otherwise called the Strait of Gibraltar, and that its collapse occurred in the not far distant past. In any event, the question of Atlantis is placed anew before men of science; and since I do not believe that it can ever be solved without the aid of oceanography, I have thought it natural to discuss it here, in this temple of maritime science, and to call to such a problem, long scorned but now being revived, the attention of oceanographers, as well as the attention of those who, though immersed in the tumult of cities, lend an ear to the distant murmur of the sea."

In his lecture M. Termier presents geologic, geographic, and zoologic data in substantiation of the Atlantis theory. Figuratively draining the entire bed of the Atlantic Ocean, he considers the inequalities of its basin and cites locations on a line from the Azores to Iceland where dredging has brought lava to the surface from a depth of 3,000 meters. The volcanic nature of the islands now existing in the Atlantic Ocean corroborates Plato's statement that the Atlantean continent

was destroyed by volcanic cataclysms. M. Termier also advances the conclusions of a young French zoologist, M. Louis Germain, who admitted the existence of an Atlantic continent connected with the Iberian Peninsula and with Mauritania and prolonged toward the south so as to include some regions of desert climate. M. Termier concludes his lecture with a graphic picture of the engulfment of that continent.

The description of the Atlantean civilization given by Plato in the *Critias* may be summarized as follows. In the first ages the gods divided the earth among themselves, proportioning it according to their respective dignities. Each became the peculiar deity of his own allotment and established therein temples to himself, ordained a priestcraft, and instituted a system of sacrifice. To Poseidon was given the sea and the island continent of Atlantis. In the midst of the island was a mountain which was the dwelling place of three earth-born primitive human beings—Evenor; his wife, Leucipe; and their only daughter, Cleito. The maiden was very beautiful, and after the sudden death of her parents she was wooed by Poseidon, who begat by her five pairs of male children. Poseidon apportioned his continent among these ten, and Atlas, the eldest, he made overlord of the other nine. Poseidon further called the country *Atlantis* and the surrounding sea the *Atlantic* in honor of Atlas. Before the birth of his ten sons, Poseidon divided the continent and the coastwise sea into concentric zones of land and water, which were as perfect as though turned upon a lathe. Two zones of land and three of water surrounded the central island, which Poseidon caused to be irrigated with two springs of water—one warm and the other cold.

The descendants of Atlas continued as rulers of Atlantis, and with wise government and industry elevated the country to a position of surpassing dignity. The natural resources of Atlantis were apparently limitless. Precious metals were mined, wild animals domesticated, and perfumes distilled from its fragrant flowers. While enjoying the abundance natural to their semitropic location, the Atlanteans employed themselves also in the erection of palaces, temples, and docks. They bridged the zones of sea and later dug a deep canal to connect the outer ocean with the central island, where stood the palaces and temple of Poseidon, which excelled all other structures in magnificence. A network of bridges and canals was created by the Atlanteans to unite the various parts of their kingdom.

Plato then describes the white, black, and red stones which they quarried from beneath their continent and used in the construction of public buildings and docks. They circumscribed each of the land zones with a wall, the outer wall

being covered with brass, the middle with tin, and the inner, which encompassed the citadel, with orichalch. The citadel, on the central island, contained the palaces, temples, and other public buildings. In its center, surrounded by a wall of gold, was a sanctuary dedicated to Cleito and Poseidon. Here the first ten princes of the island were born and here each year their descendants brought offerings. Poseidon's own temple, its exterior entirely covered with silver and its pinnacles with gold, also stood within the citadel. The interior of the temple was of ivory, gold, silver, and orichalch, even to the pillars and floor. The temple contained a colossal statue of Poseidon standing in a chariot drawn by six winged horses, about him a hundred Nereids riding on dolphins. Arranged outside the building were golden statues of the first ten kings and their wives.

In the groves and gardens were hot and cold springs. There were numerous temples to various deities, places of exercise for men and for beasts, public baths, and a great race course for horses. At various vantage points on the zones were fortifications, and to the great harbor came vessels from every maritime nation. The zones were so thickly populated that the sound of human voices was ever in the air.

That part of Atlantis facing the sea was described as lofty and precipitous, but about the central city was a plain sheltered by mountains renowned for their size, number, and beauty. The plain yielded two crops each year, in the winter being watered by rains and in the summer by immense irrigation canals, which were also used for transportation. The plain was divided into sections, and in time of war each section supplied its quota of fighting men and chariots.

The ten governments differed from each other in details concerning military requirements. Each of the kings of Atlantis had complete control over his own kingdom, but their mutual relationships were governed by a code engraved by the first ten kings on a column of orichalch standing in the temple of Poseidon. At alternate intervals of five and six years a pilgrimage was made to this temple that equal honor might be conferred upon both the odd and the even numbers. Here, with appropriate sacrifice, each king renewed his oath of loyalty upon the sacred inscription. Here also the kings donned azure robes and sat in judgment. At daybreak they wrote their sentences upon a golden tablet and deposited them with their robes as memorials. The chief laws of the Atlantean kings were that they should not take up arms against each other and that they should come to the assistance of any of their number who was attacked. In matters of war and great moment the final decision was in the hands of the direct descendants of the family of Atlas. No king had the power of life and death over his kinsmen

without the assent of a majority of the ten.

Plato concludes his description by declaring that it was this great empire which attacked the Hellenic states. This did not occur, however, until their power and glory had lured the Atlantean kings from the pathway of wisdom and virtue. Filled with false ambition, the rulers of Atlantis determined to conquer the entire world. Zeus, perceiving the wickedness of the Atlanteans, gathered the gods into his holy habitation and addressed them. Here Plato's narrative comes to an abrupt end, for the *Critias* was never finished. In the *Timæus* is a further description of Atlantis, supposedly given to Solon by an Egyptian priest and which concludes as follows:

"But afterwards there occurred violent earthquakes and floods; and in a single day and night of rain all your warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner disappeared, and was sunk beneath the sea. And that is the reason why the sea in those parts is impassable and impenetrable, because there is such a quantity of shallow mud in the way; and this was caused by the subsidence of the island."

In the introduction to his translation of the *Timæus*, Thomas Taylor quotes from a *History of Ethiopia* written by Marcellus, which contains the following reference to Atlantis: "For they relate that in their time there were seven islands in the Atlantic sea, sacred to Proserpine; and besides these, three others of an immense magnitude; one of which was sacred to Pluto, another to Ammon, and another, which is the middle of these, and is of a thousand stadia, to Neptune." Crantor, commenting upon Plato, asserted that the Egyptian priests declared the story of Atlantis to be written upon pillars which were still preserved *circa* 300 B.C. (See *Beginnings or Glimpses of Vanished Civilizations.)* Ignatius Donnelly, who gave the subject of Atlantis profound study, believed that horses were first domesticated by the Atlanteans, for which reason they have always been considered peculiarly sacred to Poseidon. (See *Atlantis*.)

From a careful consideration of Plato's description of Atlantis it is evident that the story should not be regarded as wholly historical but rather as both allegorical and historical. Origen, Porphyry, Proclus, Iamblichus, and Syrianus realized that the story concealed a profound philosophical mystery, but they disagreed as to the actual interpretation. Plato's Atlantis symbolizes the threefold nature of both the universe and the human body. The ten kings of Atlantis are the *tetractys,* or numbers, which are born as five pairs of opposites. (Consult Theon of Smyrna for the Pythagorean doctrine of opposites.) The numbers 1 to 10 rule every creature, and the numbers, in turn, are under the control of the Monad, or 1

—the Eldest among them.

With the trident scepter of Poseidon these kings held sway over the inhabitants of the seven small and three great islands comprising Atlantis. Philosophically, the ten islands symbolize the triune powers of the Superior Deity and the seven regents who bow before His eternal throne. If Atlantis be considered as the archetypal sphere, then its immersion signifies the descent of rational, organized consciousness into the illusionary, impermanent realm of irrational, mortal ignorance. Both the sinking of Atlantis and the Biblical story of the "fall of man" signify spiritual involution—a prerequisite to conscious evolution.

Either the initiated Plato used the Atlantis allegory to achieve two widely different ends or else the accounts preserved by the Egyptian priests were tampered with to perpetuate the secret doctrine. This does not mean to imply that Atlantis is purely mythological, but it overcomes the most serious obstacle to acceptance of the Atlantis theory, namely, the fantastic accounts of its origin, size, appearance, and date of destruction—9600 B.C. In the midst of the central island of Atlantis was a lofty mountain which cast a shadow five thousand stadia in extent and whose summit touched the sphere of *æther.* This is the axle mountain of the world, sacred among many races and symbolic of the human head, which rises out of the four elements of the body. This sacred mountain, upon whose summit stood the temple of the gods, gave rise to the stories of Olympus, Meru, and Asgard. The City of the Golden Gates—the capital of Atlantis—is the one now preserved among numerous religions as the *City of the Gods or* the *Holy City.* Here is the archetype of the *New Jerusalem*, with its streets paved with gold and its twelve gates shining with precious stones.

"The history of Atlantis," writes Ignatius Donnelly, "is the key of the Greek mythology. There can be no question that these gods of Greece were human beings. The tendency to attach divine attributes to great earthly rulers is one deeply implanted in human nature." (See *Atlantis*.)

The same author sustains his views by noting that the deities of the Greek pantheon were not looked upon as creators of the universe but rather as regents set over it by its more ancient original fabricators. The Garden of Eden from which humanity was driven by a flaming sword is perhaps an allusion to the earthly paradise supposedly located west of the Pillars of Hercules and destroyed by volcanic cataclysms. The Deluge legend may be traced also to the Atlantean inundation, during which a "world" was destroyed by water.

Was the religious, philosophic, and scientific knowledge possessed by the

priestcrafts of antiquity secured from Atlantis, whose submergence obliterated every vestige of its part in the drama of world progress? Atlantean sun worship has been perpetuated in the ritualism and ceremonialism of both Christianity and pagandom. Both the cross and the serpent were Atlantean emblems of divine wisdom. The divine (Atlantean) progenitors of the Mayas and Quichés of Central America coexisted within the green and azure radiance of Gucumatz, the "plumed" serpent. The six sky-born sages came into manifestation as centers of light bound together or synthesized by the seventh—and chief—of their order, the "feathered" snake. (See the *Popol Vuh*.) The title of "winged" or "plumed" snake was applied to Quetzalcoatl, or Kukulcan, the Central American initiate. The center of the Atlantean Wisdom-Religion was presumably a great pyramidal temple standing on the brow of a plateau rising in the midst of the City of the Golden Gates. From here the Initiate-Priests of the Sacred Feather went forth, carrying the keys of Universal Wisdom to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The mythologies of many nations contain accounts of gods who "came out of the sea." Certain *shamans* among the American Indians tell of holy men dressed in birds' feathers and wampum who rose out of the blue waters and instructed them in the arts and crafts. Among the legends of the Chaldeans is that of Oannes, a partly amphibious creature who came out of the sea and taught the savage peoples along the shore to read and write, till the soil, cultivate herbs for healing, study the stars, establish rational forms of government, and become conversant with the sacred Mysteries. Among the Mayas, Quetzalcoatl, the Savior-God (whom some Christian scholars believe to have been St. Thomas), issued from the waters and, after instructing the people in the essentials of civilization, rode out to sea on a magic raft of serpents to escape the wrath of the fierce god of the Fiery Mirror, Tezcatlipoca.

May it not have been that these demigods of a fabulous age who, Esdras-like, came out of the sea were Atlantean priests? All that primitive man remembered of the Atlanteans was the glory of their golden ornaments, the transcendency of their wisdom, and the sanctity of their symbols—the cross and the serpent. That they came in ships was soon forgotten, for untutored minds considered even boats as supernatural. Wherever the Atlanteans proselyted they erected pyramids and temples patterned after the great sanctuary in the City of the Golden Gates. Such is the origin of the pyramids of Egypt, Mexico, and Central America. The mounds in Normandy and Britain, as well as those of the American Indians, are remnants of a similar culture. In the midst of the Atlantean program of world colonization and conversion, the cataclysms which sank Atlantis began. The Initiate-Priests of the Sacred Feather who promised to come back to their

missionary settlements never returned; and after the lapse of centuries tradition preserved only a fantastic account of gods who came from a place where the sea now is.

H. P. Blavatsky thus sums up the causes which precipitated the Atlantean disaster: “Under the evil insinuations of their demon, Thevetat, the Atlantis-race became a nation of wicked *magicians*. In consequence of this, war was declared, the story of which would be too long to narrate; its substance may be found in the disfigured allegories of the race of Cain, the giants, and that of Noah and his righteous family. The conflict came to an end by the submersion of the Atlantis; which finds its imitation in the stories of the Babylonian and Mosaic flood: The giants and magicians ‘ * and all flesh died * and every man.’ All except Xisuthrus and Noah, who are substantially identical with the great Father of the Thlinkithians in the *Popol Vuh*, or the sacred book of the Guatemaleans, which also tells of his escaping in a large boat, like the Hindu Noah—Vaiswasvata.” (See *Isis Unveiled*.)

From the Atlanteans the world has received not only the heritage of arts and crafts, philosophies, and sciences, ethics and religions, but also the heritage of hate, strife, and perversion. The Atlanteans instigated the first war; and it has been said that all subsequent wars were fought in a fruitless effort to justify the first one and right the wrong which it caused. Before Atlantis sank, its spiritually illumined Initiates, who realized that their land was doomed because it had departed from the Path of Light, withdrew from the ill-fated continent. Carrying with them the sacred and secret doctrine, these Atlanteans established themselves in Egypt, where they became its first “divine” rulers. Nearly all the great cosmologic myths forming the foundation of the various sacred books of the world are based upon the Atlantean Mystery rituals.

The Myth of the Dying God

The myth of *Tammuz* and *Ishtar* is one of the earliest examples of the dying-god allegory, probably antedating 4000 B.C. (See *Babylonia and Assyria* by Lewis Spence.) The imperfect condition of the tablets upon which the legends are inscribed makes it impossible to secure more than a fragmentary account of the Tammuz rites. Being the esoteric god of the sun, Tammuz did not occupy a position among the first deities venerated by the Babylonians, who for lack of deeper knowledge looked upon him as a god of agriculture or a vegetation spirit. Originally he was described as being one of the guardians of the gates of the underworld. Like many other Savior-Gods, he is referred to as a "shepherd" or "the lord of the shepherd seat." Tammuz occupies the remarkable position of son and husband of Ishtar, the Babylonian and Assyrian Mother-goddess. Ishtar—to whom the planet Venus was sacred—was the most widely venerated deity of the Babylonian and Assyrian pantheon. She was probably identical with Ashteroth, Astarte, and Aphrodite. The story of her descent into the underworld in search presumably for the sacred elixir which alone could restore Tammuz to life is the key to the ritual of her Mysteries. Tammuz, whose annual festival took place just before the summer solstice, died in midsummer in the ancient month which bore his name, and was mourned with elaborate ceremonies. The manner of his death is unknown, but some of the accusations made against Ishtar by Izdubar (Nimrod) would indicate that she, indirectly at least, had contributed to his demise. The resurrection of Tammuz was the occasion of great rejoicing, at which time he was hailed as a "redeemer" of his people.

With outspread wings, Ishtar, the daughter of Sin (the Moon), sweeps downward to the gates of death. The house of darkness—the dwelling of the god Irkalla—is described as "the place of no return." It is without light; the nourishment of those who dwell therein is dust and their food is mud. Over the bolts on the door of the house of Irkalla is scattered dust, and the keepers of the house are covered with feathers like birds. Ishtar demands that the keepers open the gates, declaring that if they do not she will shatter the doorposts and strike the hinges and raise up dead devourers of the living. The guardians of the gates

beg her to be patient while they go to the queen of Hades from whom they secure permission to admit Ishtar, but only in the same manner as all others came to this dreary house. Ishtar thereupon descends through the seven gates which lead downward into the depths of the underworld. At the first gate the great crown is removed from her head, at the second gate the earrings from her ears, at the third gate the necklace from her neck, at the fourth gate the ornaments from her breast, at the fifth gate the girdle from her waist, at the sixth gate the bracelets from her hands and feet, and at the seventh gate the covering cloak of her body. Ishtar remonstrates as each successive article of apparel is taken from her, but the guardian tells her that this is the experience of all who enter the somber domain of death. Enraged upon beholding Ishtar, the Mistress of Hades inflicts upon her all manner of disease and imprisons her in the underworld.

As Ishtar represents the spirit of fertility, her loss prevents the ripening of the crops and the maturing of all life upon the earth. In this respect the story parallels the legend of Persephone. The gods, realizing that the loss of Ishtar is disorganizing all Nature, send a messenger to the underworld and demand her release. The Mistress of Hades is forced to comply, and the water of life is poured over Ishtar. Thus cured of the infirmities inflicted on her, she retraces her way upward through the seven gates, at each of which she is reinvested with the article of apparel which the guardians had removed. (See *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*.) No record exists that Ishtar secured the water of life which would have wrought the resurrection of Tammuz.

The myth of Ishtar symbolizes the descent of the human spirit through the seven worlds, or spheres of the sacred planets, until finally, deprived of its spiritual adornments, it incarnates in the physical body—Hades—where the mistress of that body heaps every form of sorrow and misery upon the imprisoned consciousness. The waters of life—the secret doctrine—cure the diseases of ignorance; and the spirit, ascending again to its divine source, regains its God-given adornments as it passes upward through the rings of the planets.

Another Mystery ritual among the Babylonians and Assyrians was that of Merodach and the Dragon. Merodach, the creator of the inferior universe, slays a horrible monster and out of her body forms the universe. Here is the probable source of the so-called Christian allegory of St. George and the Dragon.

The Mysteries of *Adonis*, or *Adoni,* were celebrated annually in many parts of Egypt, Phœnicia, and Biblos. The name *Adonis,* or *Adoni*, means “Lord” and was a designation applied to the sun and later borrowed by the Jews as the exoteric name of their God. Smyrna, mother of Adonis, was turned into a tree by

the gods and after a time the bark burst open and the infant Savior issued forth. According to one account, he was liberated by a wild boar which split the wood of the maternal tree with its tusks. Adonis was born at midnight of the 24th of December, and through his unhappy death a Mystery rite was established that wrought the salvation of his people. In the Jewish month of Tammuz (another name for this deity) he was gored to death by a wild boar sent by the god Ares (Mars). The *Adoniasmos* was the ceremony of lamenting the premature death of the murdered god.

In Ezekiel viii. 14, it is written that women were weeping for Tammuz (Adonis) at the north gate of the Lord's House in Jerusalem. Sir James George Frazer cites Jerome thus: "He tells us that Bethlehem, the traditionary birthplace of the Lord, was shaded by a grove of that still older Syrian Lord, Adonis, and that where the infant Jesus had wept, the lover of Venus was bewailed." (See *The Golden Bough*.) The effigy of a wild boar is said to have been set over one of the gates of Jerusalem in honor of Adonis, and his rites celebrated in the grotto of the Nativity at Bethlehem. Adonis as the "gored" (or "god") man is one of the keys to Sir Francis Bacon's use of the "wild boar" in his cryptic symbolism.

Adonis was originally an androgynous deity who represented the solar power which in the winter was destroyed by the evil principle of cold—the boar. After three days (months) in the tomb, Adonis rose triumphant on the 25th day of March, amidst the acclamation of his priests and followers, "He is risen!" Adonis was born out of a myrrh tree. Myrrh, the symbol of death because of its connection with the process of embalming, was one of the gifts brought by the three Magi to the manger of Jesus.

In the Mysteries of Adonis the neophyte passed through the symbolic death of the god and, "raised" by the priests, entered into the blessed state of redemption made possible by the sufferings of Adonis. Nearly all authors believe Adonis to have been originally a vegetation god directly connected with the growth and maturing of flowers and fruits. In support of this viewpoint they describe the "gardens of Adonis," which were small baskets of earth in which seeds were planted and nurtured for a period of eight days. When those plants prematurely died for lack of sufficient earth, they were considered emblematic of the murdered Adonis and were usually cast into the sea with images of the god.

In Phrygia there existed a remarkable school of religious philosophy which centered around the life and untimely fate of another Savior-God known as *Atys,* or *Attis,* by many considered synonymous with Adonis. This deity was born at midnight on the 24th day of December. Of his death there are two accounts. In

one he was gored to death like Adonis; in the other he emasculated himself under a pine tree and there died. His body was taken to a cave by the Great Mother (Cybele), where it remained through the ages without decaying. To the rites of Atys the modern world is indebted for the symbolism of the Christmas tree. Atys imparted his immortality to the tree beneath which he died, and Cybele took the tree with her when she removed the body. Atys remained three days in the tomb, rose upon a date corresponding with Easter morn, and by this resurrection overcame death for all who were initiated into his Mysteries.

"In the Mysteries of the Phrygians," says Julius Firmicus, "which are called those of the MOTHER OF THE GODS, every year a PINE TREE is cut down and in the inside of the tree the image of a YOUTH is tied in! In the Mysteries of Isis the trunk of a PINE TREE is cut: the middle of the trunk is nicely hollowed out; the idol of Osiris made from those hollowed pieces is BURIED. In the Mysteries of Proserpine a tree cut is put together into the effigy and form of the VIRGIN, and when it has been carried within the city it is MOURNED 40 nights, but the fortieth night it is BURNED!" (See *Sod, the Mysteries of Adoni.*) The Mysteries of Atys included a sacramental meal during which the neophyte ate out of a drum and drank from a cymbal. After being baptized by the blood of a bull, the new initiate was fed entirely on milk to symbolize that he was still a philosophical infant, having but recently been born out of the sphere of materiality. (See Frazer's *The Golden Bough.)* Is there a possible connection between this lacteal diet prescribed by the Attic rite and St. Paul's allusion to the food for spiritual babes? Sallust gives a key to the esoteric interpretation of the Attic rituals. Cybele, the Great Mother, signifies the vivifying powers of the universe, and Atys that aspect of the spiritual intellect which is suspended between the divine and animal spheres. The Mother of the gods, loving Atys, gave him a starry hat, signifying celestial powers, but Atys (mankind), falling in love with a nymph (symbolic of the lower animal propensities), forfeited his divinity and lost his creative powers. It is thus evident that Atys represents the human consciousness and that his Mysteries are concerned with the reattainment of the starry hat. (See *Sallust on the Gods and the World.)*

The rites of *Sabazius* were very similar to those of Bacchus and it is generally believed that the two deities are identical. Bacchus was born at Sabazius, or Sabaoth, and these names are frequently assigned to him. The Sabazian Mysteries were performed at night, and the ritual included the drawing of a live snake across the breast of the candidate. Clement of Alexandria writes: "The token of the Sabazian Mysteries to the initiated is 'the deity gliding over the breast.'" A golden serpent was the symbol of Sabazius because this deity

represented the annual renovation of the world by the solar power. The Jews borrowed the name *Sabaoth* from these Mysteries and adopted it as one of the appellations of their supreme God. During the time the Sabazian Mysteries were celebrated in Rome, the cult gained many votaries and later influenced the symbolism of Christianity.

The Cabiric Mysteries of Samothrace were renowned among the ancients, being next to the Eleusinian in public esteem. Herodotus declares that the Samothracians received their doctrines, especially those concerning Mercury, from the Pelasgians. Little is known concerning the Cabiric rituals, for they were enshrouded in the profoundest secrecy. Some regard the Cabiri as seven in number and refer to them as "the Seven Spirits of fire before the throne of Saturn." Others believe the Cabiri to be the seven sacred wanderers, later called the planets.

While a vast number of deities are associated with the Samothracian Mysteries, the ritualistic drama centers around four brothers. The first three—Aschieros, Achiochersus, and Achiochersa—attack and murder the fourth—Cashmala (or Cadmillus). Dionysidorus, however, identifies Aschieros with Demeter, Achiochersus with Pluto, Achiochersa with Persephone, and Cashmala with Hermes. Alexander Wilder notes that in the Samothracian ritual "Cadmillus is made to include the Theban Serpent-god, Cadmus, the Thoth of Egypt, the Hermes of the Greeks, and the Emeph or Æsculapius of the Alexandrians and Phœnicians." Here again is a repetition of the story of Osiris, Bacchus, Adonis, Balder, and Hiram Abiff. The worship of Atys and Cybele was also involved in the Samothracian Mysteries. In the rituals of the Cabiri is to be traced a form of pinetree worship, for this tree, sacred to Atys, was first trimmed into the form of a cross and then cut down in honor of the murdered god whose body was discovered at its foot.

"If you wish to inspect the orgies of the Corybantes," writes Clement, "then know that, having killed their third brother, they covered the head of the dead body with a purple cloth, crowned it, and carrying it on the point of a spear, buried it under the roots of Olympus. These mysteries are, in short, murders and funerals. [This ante-Nicene Father in his efforts to defame the pagan rites apparently ignores the fact that, like the Cabirian martyr, Jesus Christ was foully betrayed, tortured, and finally murdered!] And the priests of these rites, who are called kings of the sacred rites by those whose business it is to name them, give additional strangeness to the tragic occurrence, by forbidding parsley with the roots from being placed on the table, for they think that parsley grew from the

Corybantic blood that flowed forth;just as the women, in celebrating the Thesmophoria, abstain from eating the seeds of the pomegranate, which have fallen on the ground, from the idea that pomegranates sprang from the drops of the blood of Dionysus. Those Corybantes also they call Cabiric; and the ceremony itself they announce as the Cabiric mystery."

The Mysteries of the Cabiri were divided into three degrees, the first of which celebrated the death of Cashmala at the hands of his three brothers; the second, the discovery of his mutilated body, the parts of which had been found and gathered after much labor; and the third—accompanied by great rejoicing and happiness—his resurrection and the consequent salvation of the world. The temple of the Cabiri at Samothrace contained a number of curious divinities, many of them misshapen creatures representing the elemental powers of Nature, possibly the Bacchic Titans. Children were initiated into the Cabirian cult with the same dignity as adults, and criminals who reached the sanctuary were safe from pursuit. The Samothracian rites were particularly concerned with navigation, the Dioscuri—Castor and Pollux, or the gods of navigation—being among those propitiated by members of that cult. The Argonautic expedition, listening to the advice of Orpheus, stopped at the island of Samothrace for the purpose of having its members initiated into the Cabiric rites.

Herodotus relates that when Cambyses entered the temple of the Cabiri he was unable to restrain his mirth at seeing before him the figure of a man standing upright and, facing the man, the figure of a woman standing on her head. Had Cambyses been acquainted with the principles of divine astronomy, he would have realized that he was then in the presence of the key to universal equilibrium. "'I ask,' says Voltaire, 'who were these Hierophants, these sacred Freemasons, who celebrated their Ancient Mysteries of Samothracia, and whence came they and their gods Cabiri?'" (See Mackey's *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry.)* Clement speaks of the Mysteries of the Cabiri as "the sacred mystery of a brother slain by his brethren," and the "Cabiric death" was one of the secret symbols of antiquity. Thus the allegory of the Self murdered by the not-self is perpetuated through the religious mysticism of all peoples. The *philosophic death* and the *philosophic resurrection* are the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries respectively.

A curious aspect of the *dying-god* myth is that of the Hanged Man. The most important example of this peculiar conception is found in the Odinic rituals where Odin hangs himself for nine nights from the branches of the World Tree and upon the same occasion also pierces his own side with the sacred spear. As

the result of this great sacrifice, Odin, while suspended over the depths of Niflheim, discovered by meditation the runes or alphabets by which later the records of his people were preserved. Because of this remarkable experience, Odin is sometimes shown seated on a gallows tree and he became the patron deity of all who died by the noose. Esoterically, the Hanged Man is the human spirit which is suspended from heaven by a single thread. Wisdom, not death, is the reward for this voluntary sacrifice during which the human soul, suspended above the world of illusion, and meditating upon its unreality, is rewarded by the achievement of self-realization.

From a consideration of all these ancient and secret rituals it becomes evident that the mystery of the *dying god* was universal among the illumined and venerated colleges of the sacred teaching. This mystery has been perpetuated in Christianity in the crucifixion and death of the God-man—Jesus the Christ. The secret import of this world tragedy and the Universal Martyr must be rediscovered if Christianity is to reach the heights attained by the pagans in the days of their philosophic supremacy. The myth of the *dying god* is the key to both universal and individual redemption and regeneration, and those who do not comprehend the true nature of this supreme allegory are not privileged to consider themselves either wise or truly religious.

VI

The Life and Writings of Thoth Hermes Trismegistus

Thunder rolled, lightning flashed, the veil of the Temple was rent from top to bottom. The venerable initiator, in his robes *of blue and gold, slowly raised his jeweled wand and pointed with it into the darkness revealed by the tearing of the silken curtain: "Behold the Light of Egypt!" The candidate, in his plain white robe, gazed into the utter blackness framed by the two great lotus-headed columns between which the veil had hung. As he watched, a luminous haze distributed itself throughout the atmosphere until the air was a mass of shining particles. The face of the neophyte was illumined by the soft glow as he scanned the shimmering cloud for some tangible object. The initiator spoke again: "This Light which ye behold is the secret luminance of the Mysteries. Whence it comes none knoweth, save the 'Master of the Light.' Behold Him!" Suddenly, through the gleaming mist a figure appeared, surrounded by a flickering greenish sheen. The initiator lowered his wand and, bowing his head, placed one hand edgewise against his breast in humble salutation. The neophyte stepped back in awe, partly blinded by the glory of the revealed figure. Gaining courage, the youth gazed again at the Divine One. The Form before him was considerably larger than that of a mortal man. The body seemed partly transparent so that the heart and brain could be seen pulsating and radiant. As the candidate watched, the heart changed into an ibis, and the brain into a flashing emerald. In Its hand this mysterious Being bore a winged rod, entwined with serpents. The aged initiator, raising his wand, cried out in a loud voice: "All hail Thee, Thoth Hermes, Thrice Greatest; all hail Thee, Prince of Men; all hail Thee who standeth upon the head of Typhon!" At the same instant a lurid writhing dragon appeared—a hideous monster, part serpent, part crocodile, and part hog. From its mouth and nostrils poured sheets of flame and horrible sounds echoed through the vaulted chambers. Suddenly Hermes struck the advancing reptile with the serpent-wound staff and with snarling cry the dragon fell over upon its side, while the flames about it slowly died away. Hermes placed His foot upon the skull of the*

vanquished Typhon. The next instant, with a blaze of unbearable glory that sent the neophyte staggering backward against a pillar, the immortal Hermes, followed by streamers of greenish mist, passed through the chamber and faded into nothingness.

FROM HISTORIA DEORUM FATIDICORUM.

HERMES MERCURIUS TRISMEGISTUS.

Master of all arts and sciences, perfect in all crafts. Ruler of the Three Worlds, Scribe of the Gods, and Keeper of the Books of Life, Thoth Hermes Trismegistus—the Three Times Greatest, the "First Intelligencer"—was regarded by the ancient Egyptians as the embodiment of the Universal Mind. While in all probability there actually existed a great sage and educator by the name of Hermes, it is impossible to extricate the historical man from the mass of legendary accounts which attempt to identify him with the Cosmic Principle of Thought.

Suppositions Concerning the Identity of Hermes

Iamblichus averred that Hermes was the author of twenty thousand books; Manetho increased the number to more than thirty-six thousand (see James Gardner)—figures which make it evident that a solitary individual, even though he be overshadowed by divine prerogative, could scarcely have accomplished such a monumental labor. Among the arts and sciences which it is affirmed Hermes revealed to mankind were medicine, chemistry, law, art, astrology, music, rhetoric, magic, philosophy, geography, mathematics (especially geometry), anatomy, and oratory. Orpheus was similarly acclaimed by the Greeks.

In his *Biographia Antiqua,* Francis Barrett says of Hermes: " * if God ever appeared in man, he appeared in him, as is evident both from his books and his Pymander; in which works he has communicated the sum of the Abyss, and the divine knowledge to all posterity; by which he has demonstrated himself to have been not only an inspired divine, but also a deep philosopher, obtaining his wisdom from God and heavenly things, and not from man."

His transcendent learning caused Hermes to be identified with many of the early sages and prophets. In his *Ancient Mythology,* Bryant writes: "I have mentioned that Cadmus was the same as the Egyptian Thoth; and it is manifest from his being Hermes, and from the invention of letters being attributed to him." (In the chapter on the theory of *Pythagorean Mathematics* will be found the table of the original Cadmean letters.) Investigators believe that it was Hermes who was known to the Jews as "Enoch," called by Kenealy the "Second Messenger of God." Hermes was accepted into the mythology of the Greeks, later becoming the Mercury of the Latins. He was revered through the form of the planet Mercury because this body is nearest to the sun: Hermes of all creatures was nearest to God, and became known as the Messenger of the Gods.

In the Egyptian drawings of him, Thoth carries a waxen writing tablet and serves as the recorder during the weighing of the souls of the dead in the Judgment Hall of Osiris—a ritual of great significance. Hermes is of first

importance to Masonic scholars, because he was the author of the Masonic initiatory rituals, which were borrowed from the Mysteries established by Hermes. Nearly all of the Masonic symbols are Hermetic in character. Pythagoras studied mathematics with the Egyptians and from them gained his knowledge of the symbolic geometric solids. Hermes is also revered for his reformation of the calendar system. He increased the year from 360 to 365 days, thus establishing a precedent which still prevails. The appellation “Thrice Greatest” was given to Hermes because he was considered the greatest of all philosophers, the greatest of all priests, and the greatest of all kings. It is worthy of note that the last poem of America’s beloved poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, was a lyric ode to Hermes. (See *Chambers’ Encyclopædia.*)

The Mutitated Hermetic Fragments

On the subject of the Hermetic books, James Campbell Brown, in his *History of Chemistry,* has written: “Leaving the Chaldean and earliest Egyptian periods, of which we have remains but no record, and from which no names of either chemists or philosophers have come down to us, we now approach the Historic Period, when books were written, not at first upon parchment or paper, but upon papyrus. A series of early Egyptian books is attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, who may have been a real *savant,* or may be a personification of a long succession of writers. * He is identified by some with the Greek god Hermes, and the Egyptian Thoth or Tuti, who was the moon-god, and is represented in ancient paintings as ibis-headed with the disc and crescent of the moon. The Egyptians regarded him as the god of wisdom, letters, and the recording of time. It is in consequence of the great respect entertained for Hermes by the old alchemists that chemical writings were called ‘hermetic,’ and that the phrase ‘hermetically sealed’ is still in use to designate the closing of a glass vessel by fusion, after the manner of chemical manipulators. We find the same root in the hermetic medicines of Paracelsus, and the hermetic freemasonry of the Middle Ages.”

Among the fragmentary writings believed to have come from the stylus of Hermes are two famous works. The first is the *Emerald Table,* and the second is the *Divine Pymander,* or, as it is more commonly called, *The Shepherd of Men,* a discussion of which follows. One outstanding point in connection with Hermes is that he was one of the few philosopher-priests of pagandom upon whom the early Christians did not vent their spleen. Some Church Fathers went so far as to declare that Hermes exhibited many symptoms of intelligence, and that if he had only been born in a more enlightened age so that he might have benefited by *their* instructions he would have been a really great man!

In his *Stromata*, Clement of Alexandria, one of the few chroniclers of pagan lore whose writings have been preserved to this age, gives practically all the information that is known concerning the original forty-two books of Hermes and the importance with which these books were regarded by both the temporal

and spiritual powers of Egypt. Clement describes one of their ceremonial processions as follows: “For the Egyptians pursue a philosophy of their own. This is principally shown by their sacred ceremonial. For first advances the Singer, bearing some one of the symbols of music. For they say that he must learn two of the books of Hermes, the one of which contains the hymns of the gods, the second the regulations for the king’s life. And after the Singer advances the Astrologer, with a horologe in his hand, and a palm, the symbols of astrology. He must have the astrological books of Hermes, which are four in number, always in his mouth. Of these, one is about the order of the fixed stars that are visible, and another about the conjunctions and luminous appearances of the sun and moon; and the rest respecting their risings. Next in order advances the sacred Scribe, with wings on his head, and in his hand a book and rule, in which were writing ink and the reed, with which they write. And he must be acquainted with what are called hieroglyphics, and know about cosmography and geography, the position of the sun and moon, and about the five planets; also the description of Egypt, and the chart of the Nile; and the description of the equipment of the priests and of the place consecrated to them, and about the measures and the things in use in the sacred rites. Then the Stole-keeper follows those previously mentioned, with the cubit of justice and the cup for libations. He is acquainted with all points called Pædeutic (relating to training) and Moschophaltic (sacrificial). There are also ten books which relate to the honour paid by them to their gods, and containing the Egyptian worship; as that relating to sacrifices, first-fruits, hymns, prayers, processions, festivals, and the like. And behind all walks the Prophet, with the water-vase carried openly in his arms; who is followed by those who carry the issue of loaves. He, as being the governor of the temple, learns the ten books called ‘Hieratic’; and they contain all about the laws, and the gods, and the whole of the training of the priests. For the Prophet is, among the Egyptians, also over the distribution of the revenues. There are then forty-two books of Hermes indispensably necessary; of which the six-and-thirty containing the whole philosophy of the Egyptians are learned by the forementioned personages; and the other six, which are medical, by the Pastophoroi (image-bearers), —treating of the structure of the body, and of diseases, and instruments, and medicines, and about the eyes, and the last about women.”

One of the greatest tragedies of the philosophic world was the loss of nearly all of the forty-two books of Hermes mentioned in the foregoing. These books disappeared during the burning of Alexandria, for the Romans—and later the Christians—realized that until these books were eliminated they could never

bring the Egyptians into subjection. The volumes which escaped the fire were buried in the desert and their location is now known to only a few initiates of the secret schools.

The Book of Thoth

While Hermes still walked the earth with men, he entrusted to his chosen successors the sacred *Book of Thoth.* This work contained the secret processes by which the regeneration of humanity was to be accomplished and also served as the key to his other writings. Nothing definite is known concerning the contents of the *Book of Thoth* other than that its pages were covered with strange hieroglyphic figures and symbols, which gave to those acquainted with their use unlimited power over the spirits of the air and the subterranean divinities. When certain areas of the brain are stimulated by the secret processes of the Mysteries, the consciousness of man is extended and he is permitted to behold the Immortals and enter into the presence of the superior gods. The *Book of Thoth* described the method whereby this stimulation was accomplished. In truth, therefore, it was the "Key to Immortality."

According to legend, the *Book of Thoth* was kept in a golden box in the inner sanctuary of the temple. There was but one key and this was in the possession of the "Master of the Mysteries," the highest initiate of the Hermetic Arcanum. He alone knew what was written in the secret book. The *Book of Thoth* was lost to the ancient world with the decay of the Mysteries, but its faithful initiates carried it sealed in the sacred casket into another land. The book is still in existence and continues to lead the disciples of this age into the presence of the Immortals. No other information can be given to the world concerning it now, but the apostolic succession from the first hierophant initiated by Hermes himself remains unbroken to this day, and those who are peculiarly fitted to serve the Immortals may discover this priceless document if they will search sincerely and tirelessly for it.

It has been asserted that the *Book of Thoth* is, in reality, the mysterious *Tarot* of the Bohemians—a strange emblematic book of seventy-eight leaves which has been in possession of the gypsies since the time when they were driven from their ancient temple, the Serapeum. (According to the Secret Histories the gypsies were originally Egyptian priests.) There are now in the world several secret schools privileged to initiate candidates into the Mysteries, but in nearly

every instance they lighted their altar fires from the flaming torch of *Herm.* Hermes in his *Book of Thoth* revealed to all mankind the "One Way," and for ages the wise of every nation and every faith have reached immortality by the "Way" established by Hermes in the midst of the darkness for the redemption of humankind.

FROM WILKINSON'S MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

THOTH, THE IBIS-HEADED.

It is doubtful that the deity called *Thoth* by the Egyptians was originally Hermes, but the two personalities were blended together and it is now impossible to separate them. Thoth was called "The Lord of the Divine Books" and "Scribe of the Company of the Gods." He is generally pictured with the body of a man and the head of an ibis. The exact symbolic meaning of this latter bird has never been discovered. A careful analysis of the peculiar shape of the ibis—especially its head and beak—should prove illuminating.

Poimandres, the Vision of Hermes

The Divine Pymander of Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus is one of the earliest of the Hermetic writings now extant. While probably not in its original form, having been remodeled during the first centuries of the Christian Era and incorrectly translated since, this work undoubtedly contains many of the original concepts of the Hermetic *cultus. The Divine Pymander* consists of seventeen fragmentary writings gathered together and put forth as one work. The second book of *The Divine Pymander,* called *Poimandres*, or *The Vision*, is believed to describe the method by which the divine wisdom was first revealed to Hermes. It was after Hermes had received this revelation that he began his ministry, teaching to all who would listen the secrets of the invisible universe as they had been unfolded to him.

The Vision is the most famous of all the Hermetic fragments, and contains an exposition of Hermetic cosmogony and the secret sciences of the Egyptians regarding the culture and unfoldment of the human soul. For some time it was erroneously called "The Genesis of Enoch," but that mistake has now been rectified. At hand while preparing the following interpretation of the symbolic philosophy concealed within *The Vision of Hermes* the present author has had these reference works: *The Divine Pymander of Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus* (London, 1650), translated out of the Arabic and Greek by Dr. Everard; *Hermetica* (Oxford, 1924), edited by Walter Scott; *Hermes, The Mysteries of Egypt* (Philadelphia, 1925), by Edouard Schure; and the *Thrice-Greatest Hermes* (London, 1906), by G.R.S. Mead. To the material contained in the above volumes he has added commentaries based upon the esoteric philosophy of the ancient Egyptians, together with amplifications derived partly from other Hermetic fragments and partly from the secret arcanum of the Hermetic sciences. For the sake of clarity, the narrative form has been chosen in preference to the original dialogic style, and obsolete words have given place to those in current use.

Hermes, while wandering in a rocky and desolate place, gave himself over to meditation and prayer. Following the secret instructions of the Temple, he

gradually freed his higher consciousness from the bondage of his bodily senses; and, thus released, his divine nature revealed to him the mysteries of the transcendental spheres. He beheld a figure, terrible and awe-inspiring. It was the Great Dragon, with wings stretching across the sky and light streaming in all directions from its body. (The Mysteries taught that the Universal Life was personified as a dragon.) The Great Dragon called Hermes by name, and asked him why he thus meditated upon the World Mystery. Terrified by the spectacle, Hermes prostrated himself before the Dragon, beseeching it to reveal its identity. The great creature answered that it was *Poimandres,* the *Mind of the Universe,* the Creative Intelligence, and the Absolute Emperor of all. (Schure identifies Poimandres as the god Osiris.) Hermes then besought Poimandres to disclose the nature of the universe and the constitution of the gods. The Dragon acquiesced, bidding Trismegistus hold its image in his mind.

Immediately the form of Poimandres changed. Where it had stood there was a glorious and pulsating Radiance. This Light was the spiritual nature of the Great Dragon itself. Hermes was “raised” into the midst of this divine Effulgence and the universe of material things faded from his consciousness. Presently a great darkness descended and, expanding, swallowed up the Light. Everything was troubled. About Hermes swirled a mysterious watery substance which gave forth a smokelike vapor. The air was filled with inarticulate moanings and sigh-ings which seemed to come from the Light swallowed up in the darkness. His mind told Hermes that the Light was the form of the spiritual universe and that the swirling darkness which had engulfed it represented material substance.

Then out of the imprisoned Light a mysterious and Holy Word came forth and took its stand upon the smoking waters. This Word—the Voice of the Light—rose out of the darkness as a great pillar, and the fire and the air followed after it, but the earth and the water remained unmoved below. Thus the waters of Light were divided from the waters of darkness, and from the waters of Light were formed the worlds above and from the waters of darkness were formed the worlds below. The earth and the water next mingled, becoming inseparable, and the Spiritual Word which is called *Reason* moved upon their surface, causing endless turmoil.

Then again was heard the voice of Poimandres, but His form was not revealed: “I Thy God am the Light and the Mind which were before substance was divided from spirit and darkness from Light. And the Word which appeared as a pillar of flame out of the darkness is the Son of God, born of the mystery of the Mind. The name of that Word is *Reason.* Reason is the offspring of Thought

and Reason shall divide the Light from the darkness and establish Truth in the midst of the waters. Understand, O Hermes, and meditate deeply upon the mystery. That which in you sees and hears is not of the earth, but is the Word of God incarnate. So it is said that Divine Light dwells in the midst of mortal darkness, and ignorance cannot divide them. The union of the Word and the Mind produces that mystery which is called *Life.* As the darkness without you is divided against itself, so the darkness within you is likewise divided. The Light and the fire which rise are the divine man, ascending in the path of the Word, and that which fails to ascend is the mortal man, which may not partake of immortality. Learn deeply of the Mind and its mystery, for therein lies the secret of immortality."

The Dragon again revealed its form to Hermes, and for a long time the two looked steadfastly one upon the other, eye to eye, so that Hermes trembled before the gaze of Poimandres. At the Word of the Dragon the heavens opened and the innumerable Light Powers were revealed, soaring through Cosmos on pinions of streaming fire. Hermes beheld the spirits of the stars, the celestials controlling the universe, and all those Powers which shine with the radiance of the One Fire—the glory of the Sovereign Mind. Hermes realized that the sight which he beheld was revealed to him only because Poimandres had spoken a Word. The Word was Reason, and by the Reason of the Word invisible things were made manifest. Divine Mind—the Dragon—continued its discourse:

"Before the visible universe was formed its mold was cast. This mold was called the *Archetype,* and this Archetype was in the Supreme Mind long before the process of creation began. Beholding the Archetypes, the Supreme Mind became enamored with Its own thought; so, taking the Word as a mighty hammer, It gouged out caverns in primordial space and cast the form of the spheres in the Archetypal mold, at the same time sowing in the newly fashioned bodies the seeds of living things. The darkness below, receiving the hammer of the Word, was fashioned into an orderly universe. The elements separated into strata and each brought forth living creatures. The Supreme Being—the Mind—male and female, brought forth the Word; and the Word, suspended between Light and darkness, was delivered of another Mind called the *Workman,* the *Master-Builder,* or the *Maker of Things.*

"In this manner it was accomplished, O Hermes: The Word moving like a breath through space called forth the *Fire* by the friction of its motion. Therefore, the Fire is called the *Son of Striving.* The Workman passed as a whirlwind through the universe, causing the substances to vibrate and glow with

its friction. The Son of Striving thus formed *Seven Governors,* the Spirits of the Planets, whose orbits bounded the world; and the Seven Governors controlled the world by the mysterious power called *Destiny* given them by the Fiery Workman. When the *Second Mind* (The Workman) had organized Chaos, the Word of God rose straightway out of its prison of substance, leaving the elements without Reason, and joined Itself to the nature of the Fiery Workman. Then the Second Mind, together with the risen Word, established Itself in the midst of the universe and whirled the wheels of the Celestial Powers. This shall continue from an infinite beginning to an infinite end, for the beginning and the ending are in the same place and state.

"Then the downward-turned and unreasoning elements brought forth creatures without Reason. Substance could not bestow Reason, for Reason had ascended out of it. The air produced flying things and the waters such as swim. The earth conceived strange four-footed and creeping beasts, dragons, composite demons, and grotesque monsters. Then the Father—the Supreme Mind—being Light and Life, fashioned a glorious Universal Man in Its own image, not an earthy man but a heavenly Man dwelling in the Light of God. The *Supreme Mind* loved the Man It had fashioned and delivered to Him the control of the creations and workmanships.

"The Man, desiring to labor, took up His abode in the sphere of generation and observed the works of His brother—the Second Mind—which sat upon the Ring of the Fire. And having beheld the achievements of the Fiery Workman, He willed also to make things, and His Father gave permission. The Seven Governors, of whose powers He partook, rejoiced and each gave the Man a share of Its own nature.

"The Man longed to pierce the circumference of the circles and understand the mystery of Him who sat upon the Eternal Fire. Having already all power, He stooped down and peeped through the seven Harmonies and, breaking through the strength of the circles, made Himself manifest to Nature stretched out below. The Man, looking into the depths, smiled, for He beheld a shadow upon the earth and a likeness mirrored in the waters, which shadow and likeness were a reflection of Himself. The Man fell in love with His own shadow and desired to descend into it. Coincident with the desire, the Intelligent Thing united Itself with the unreasoning image or shape.

"Nature, beholding the descent, wrapped herself about the Man whom she loved, and the two were mingled. For this reason, earthy man is composite. Within him is the Sky Man, immortal and beautiful; without is Nature, mortal

and destructible. Thus, suffering is the result of the Immortal Man's falling in love with His shadow and giving up Reality to dwell in the darkness of illusion; for, being immortal, man has the power of the Seven Governors—also the Life, the Light, and the Word—but being mortal, he is controlled by the Rings of the Governors—Fate or Destiny.

"Of the Immortal Man it should be said that He is hermaphrodite, or male and female, and eternally watchful. He neither slumbers nor sleeps, and is governed by a Father also both male and female, and ever watchful. Such is the mystery kept hidden to this day, for Nature, being mingled in marriage with the Sky Man, brought forth a wonder most wonderful—seven men, all bisexual, male and female, and upright of stature, each one exemplifying the natures of the Seven Governors. These, O Hermes, are the seven races, species, and wheels.

"After this manner were the seven men generated. Earth was the female element and water the male element, and from the fire and the aether they received their spirits, and Nature produced bodies after the species and shapes of men. And man received the Life and Light of the Great Dragon, and of the Life was made his Soul and of the Light his Mind. And so, all these composite creatures containing immortality, but partaking of mortality, continued in this state for the duration of a period. They reproduced themselves out of themselves, for each was male and female. But at the end of the period the knot of Destiny was untied by the will of God and the bond of all things was loosened.

"Then all living creatures, including man, which had been hermaphroditi-cal, were separated, the males being set apart by themselves and the females likewise, according to the dictates of Reason.

"Then God spoke to the Holy Word within the soul of all things, saying: 'Increase in increasing and multiply in multitudes, all you, my creatures and workmanships. Let him that is endued with Mind know himself to be immortal and that the cause of death is the love of the body; and let him learn all things that are, for he who has recognized himself enters into the state of Good.'

"And when God had said this, Providence, with the aid of the Seven Governors and Harmony, brought the sexes together, making the mixtures and establishing the generations, and all things were multiplied according to their kind. He who through the error of attachment loves his body, abides wandering in darkness, sensible and suffering the things of death, but he who realizes that the body is but the tomb of his soul, rises to immortality."

Then Hermes desired to know why men should be deprived of immortality for

the sin of ignorance alone. The Great Dragon answered: “To the ignorant the body is supreme and they are incapable of realizing the immortality that is within them. Knowing only the body which is subject to death, they believe in death because they worship that substance which is the cause and reality of death.”

Then Hermes asked how the righteous and wise pass to God, to which Poimandres replied: “That which the Word of God said, say I: ‘Because the Father of all things consists of Life and Light, whereof man is made.’ If, therefore, a man shall learn and understand the nature of Life and Light, then he shall pass into the eternity of Life and Light.”

Hermes next inquired about the road by which the wise attained to Life eternal, and Poimandres continued: “Let the man endued with a Mind mark, consider, and learn of himself, and with the power of his Mind divide himself from his not-self and become a servant of Reality.”

Hermes asked if all men did not have Minds, and the Great Dragon replied: “Take heed what you say, for I am the Mind—the Eternal Teacher. I am the Father of the *Word*—the Redeemer of all men—and in the nature of the wise the Word takes flesh. By means of the Word, the world is saved. I, *Thought* (Thoth)—the Father of the Word, the Mind—come only unto men that are holy and good, pure and merciful, and that live piously and religiously, and my presence is an inspiration and a help to them, for when I come they immediately know all things and adore the Universal Father. Before such wise and philosophic ones die, they learn to renounce their senses, knowing that these are the enemies of their immortal souls.

“I will not permit the evil senses to control the bodies of those who love me, nor will I allow evil emotions and evil thoughts to enter them. I become as a porter or doorkeeper, and shut out evil, protecting the wise from their own lower nature. But to the wicked, the envious and the covetous, I come not, for such cannot understand the mysteries of *Mind;* therefore, I am unwelcome. I leave them to the avenging demon that they are making in their own souls, for evil each day increases itself and torments man more sharply, and each evil deed adds to the evil deeds that are gone before until finally evil destroys itself. The punishment of desire is the agony of unfulfillment.”

Hermes bowed his head in thankfulness to the Great Dragon who had taught him so much, and begged to hear more concerning the ultimate of the human soul. So Poimandres resumed: “At death the material body of man is returned to

the elements from which it came, and the invisible divine man ascends to the source from whence he came, namely the *Eighth Sphere*. The evil passes to the dwelling place of the demon, and the senses, feelings, desires, and body passions return to their source, namely the Seven Governors, whose natures in the lower man destroy but in the invisible spiritual man give life.

"After the lower nature has returned to the brutishness, the higher struggles again to regain its spiritual estate. It ascends the seven Rings upon which sit the Seven Governors and returns to each their lower powers in this manner: Upon the first ring sits the Moon, and to it is returned the ability to increase and diminish. Upon the second ring sits Mercury, and to it are returned machinations, deceit, and craftiness. Upon the third ring sits Venus, and to it are returned the lusts and passions. Upon the fourth ring sits the Sun, and to this Lord are returned ambitions. Upon the fifth ring sits Mars, and to it are returned rashness and profane boldness. Upon the sixth ring sits Jupiter, and to it are returned the sense of accumulation and riches. And upon the seventh ring sits Saturn, at the Gate of Chaos, and to it are returned falsehood and evil plotting.

"Then, being naked of all the accumulations of the seven Rings, the soul comes to the Eighth Sphere, namely, the ring of the fixed stars. Here, freed of all illusion, it dwells in the Light and sings praises to the Father in a voice which only the pure of spirit may understand. Behold, O Hermes, there is a great mystery in the Eighth Sphere, for the Milky Way is the seed-ground of souls, and from it they drop into the Rings, and to the Milky Way they return again from the wheels of Saturn. But some cannot climb the seven-runged ladder of the Rings. So they wander in darkness below and are swept into eternity with the illusion of sense and earthiness.

"The path to immortality is hard, and only a few find it. The rest await the Great Day when the wheels of the universe shall be stopped and the immortal sparks shall escape from the sheaths of substance. Woe unto those who wait, for they must return again, unconscious and unknowing, to the seed-ground of stars, and await a new beginning. Those who are saved by the light of the mystery which I have revealed unto you, O Hermes, and which I now bid you to establish among men, shall return again to the Father who dwelleth in the White Light, and shall deliver themselves up to the Light and shall be absorbed into the Light, and in the Light they shall become Powers in God. This is the Way of *Good* and is revealed only to them that have wisdom.

"Blessed art thou, O Son of Light, to whom of all men, I, Poimandres, the Light of the World, have revealed myself. I order you to go forth, to become as a

guide to those who wander in darkness, that all men within whom dwells the spirit of *My Mind* (The Universal Mind) may be saved by My Mind in you, which shall call forth My Mind in them. Establish My Mysteries and they shall not fail from the earth, for I am the Mind of the Mysteries and until Mind fails (which is never) my Mysteries cannot fail." With these parting words, Poimandres, radiant with celestial light, vanished, mingling with the powers of the heavens. Raising his eyes unto the heavens, Hermes blessed the Father of All Things and consecrated his life to the service of the Great Light.

Thus preached Hermes: "O people of the earth, men born and made of the elements, but with the spirit of the Divine Man within you, rise from your sleep of ignorance! Be sober and thoughtful. Realize that your home is not in the earth but in the Light. Why have you delivered yourselves over unto death, having power to partake of immortality? Repent, and *change your minds.* Depart from the dark light and forsake corruption forever. Prepare yourselves to climb through the Seven Rings and to blend your souls with the eternal Light."

Some who heard mocked and scoffed and went their way, delivering themselves to the Second Death from which there is no salvation. But others, casting themselves before the feet of Hermes, besought him to teach them the Way of Life. He lifted them gently, receiving no approbation for himself, and staff in hand, went forth teaching and guiding mankind, and showing them how they might be saved. In the worlds of men, Hermes sowed the seeds of wisdom and nourished the seeds with the Immortal Waters. And at last came the evening of his life, and as the brightness of the light of earth was beginning to go down, Hermes commanded his disciples to preserve his doctrines inviolate throughout all ages. The *Vision of Poimandres* he committed to writing that all men desiring immortality might therein find the way.

In concluding his exposition of the *Vision,* Hermes wrote: "The sleep of the body is the sober watchfulness of the Mind and the shutting of my eyes reveals the true Light. My silence is filled with budding life and hope, and is full of good. My words are the blossoms of fruit of the tree of my soul. For this is the faithful account of what I received from my true Mind, that is Poimandres, the Great Dragon, the Lord of the Word, through whom I became inspired by God with the Truth. Since that day my Mind has been ever with me and in my own soul it hath given birth to the Word: the Word is Reason, and Reason hath redeemed me. For which cause, with all my soul and all my strength, I give praise and blessing unto God the Father, the Life and the Light, and the Eternal Good.

“Holy is God, the Father of all things, the One who is before the First Beginning.

“Holy is God, whose will is performed and accomplished by His own Powers which He hath given birth to out of Himself.

“Holy is God, who has determined that He shall be known, and who is known by His own to whom He reveals Himself.

“Holy art Thou, who by Thy Word (Reason) hast established all things.

“Holy art Thou, of whom all Nature is the image.

“Holy art Thou, whom the inferior nature has not formed.

“Holy art Thou, who art stronger than all powers.

“Holy art Thou, who art greater than all excellency.

“Holy art Thou, who art better than all praise.

“Accept these reasonable sacrifices from a pure soul and a heart stretched out unto Thee.

“O Thou Unspeakable, Unutterable, to be praised with silence!

“I beseech Thee to look mercifully upon me, that I may not err from the knowledge of Thee and that I may enlighten those that are in ignorance, my brothers and Thy sons.

“Therefore I believe Thee and bear witness unto Thee, and depart in peace and in trustfuless into Thy Light and Life.

“Blessed art Thou, O Father! The man Thou hast fashioned would be sanctified with Thee as Thou hast given him power to sanctify others with Thy Word and Thy Truth.”

The *Vision of Hermes*, like nearly all of the Hermetic writings, is an allegorical exposition of great philosophic and mystic truths, and its hidden meaning may be comprehended only by those who have been “raised” into the presence of the True Mind.

VII

The Initiation of the Pyramid

Supreme among the wonders of antiquity, unrivaled by the achievements of later architects and builders, the Great Pyramid of Gizeh bears mute witness to an unknown civilization which, having completed its predestined span, passed into oblivion. Eloquent in its silence, inspiring in its majesty, divine in its simplicity, the Great Pyramid is indeed a sermon in stone. Its magnitude overwhelms the puny sensibilities of man. Among the shifting sands of time it stands as a fitting emblem of eternity itself. Who were the illumined mathematicians who planned its parts and dimensions, the master craftsmen who supervised its construction, the skilled artisans who trued its blocks of stone?

The earliest and best-known account of the building of the Great Pyramid is that given by that highly revered but somewhat imaginative historian, Herodotus. “The pyramid was built in steps, battlement-wise, as it is called, or, according to others, altar-wise. After laying the stones for the base, they raised the remaining stones to their places by means of machines formed to short wooden planks. The first machine raised them from the ground to the top of the first step. On this there was another machine, which received the stone upon its arrival, and conveyed it to the second step, whence a third machine advanced it still higher. Either they had as many machines as there were steps in the pyramid, or possibly they had but a single machine, which, being easily moved, was transferred from tier to tier as the stone rose. Both accounts are given, and therefore I mention both. The upper portion of the pyramid was finished first, then the middle, and finally the part which was lowest and nearest the ground. There is an inscription in Egyptian characters on the pyramid which records the quantity of radishes, onions, and garlick consumed by the labourers who constructed it; and I perfectly well remember that the interpreter who read the writing to me said that the money expended in this way was 1600 talents of silver. If this then is a true record, what a vast sum must have been spent on the iron tools used in the work,

and on the feeding and clothing of the labourers, considering the length of time the work lasted, which has already been stated [ten years], and the additional time—no small space, I imagine—which must have been occupied by the quarrying of the stones, their conveyance, and the formation of the underground apartments."

CEDIPUS AND THE SPHINX.

The Egyptian Sphinx is closely related to the Greek legend of Œdipus, who first solved the famous riddle propounded by the mysterious creature with the body of a winged lion and the head of a woman which frequented the highway leading to Thebes. To each who passed her lair the sphinx addressed the question, "What aminal is it that in the morning goes on four feet, at noon on two feet, and in the evening on three feet?" Those who failed to answer her riddle she destroyed. Œdipus declared the answer to be man himself, who in childhood crawled upon his hands and knees, in manhood stood erect, and in old age shuffled along supporting himself by a staff. Discovering one who knew the answer to her riddle, the sphinx cast herself from the cliff which bordered the road and perished.

There is still another answer to the riddle of the sphinx, an answer best revealed by a consideration of the Pythagorean values of numbers. The 4, the 2, and the 3 produce the sum of 9, which is that natural number of man and also of the lower worlds. The 4 represents the ignorant man, the 2 the intellectual man, and the 3 the spiritual man. Infant humanity walks on four legs, evolving humanity on two legs, and to the power of his own mind the redeemed and illuminated *magus* adds the staff of wisdom. The sphinx is therefore the mystery of Nature, the embodiment of the secret doctrine, and all who cannot solve her riddle perish. To pass the sphinx is to attain personal immortality.

While his account is extremely colorful, it is apparent that the Father of History, for reasons which he doubtless considered sufficient, concocted a fraudulent story to conceal the true origin and the purpose of the Great Pyramid. This is but one of several instances in his writings which would lead the thoughtful reader to suspect that Herodotus himself was an initiate of the Sacred Schools and consequently obligated to preserve inviolate the secrets of the ancient orders. The theory advanced by Herodotus and now generally accepted that the Pyramid was the tomb of the Pharaoh Cheops cannot be substantiated. In fact, Manetho, Eratosthenes, and Diodorus Siculus all differ from Herodotus—as well as from each other—regarding the name of the builder of this supreme edifice. The sepulchral vault, which, according to the Lepsius Law of pyramid construction, should have been finished at the same time as the monument or sooner, was never completed. There is no proof that the building was erected by the Egyptians, for the elaborate carvings with which the burial chambers of Egyptian royalty are almost invariably ornamented are entirely lacking and it embodies none of the elements of their architecture or decoration, such as inscriptions, images, cartouches, paintings, and other distinctive features associated with dynastic mortuary art. The only hieroglyphics to be found within the Pyramid are a few builders' marks sealed up in the *chambers of construction*, first opened by Howard Vyse. These apparently were painted upon the stones before they were set in position, for in a number of instances the marks were either inverted or disfigured by the operation of fitting the blocks together. While Egyptologists have attempted to identify the crude dabs of paint as cartouches of Cheops, it is almost inconceivable that this ambitious ruler would have permitted his royal name to suffer such indignities. As the most eminent authorities on the subject are still uncertain as to the true meaning of these crude markings, whatever proof they might be that the building was erected during the fourth dynasty is certainly offset by the sea shells at the base of the Pyramid which Mr. Gab advances as evidence that it was erected before the Deluge—a theory

substantiated by the much-abused Arabian traditions. One Arabian historian declared that the Pyramid was built by the Egyptian sages as a refuge against the Flood, while another proclaimed it to have been the treasure house of the powerful antediluvian king Sheddad Ben Ad. A panel of hieroglyphs over the entrance, which the casual observer might consider to afford a solution of the mystery, unfortunately dates back no further than A.D. 1843, having been cut at that time by Dr. Lepsius as a tribute to the King of Prussia.

Caliph al Mamoun, an illustrious descendant of the Prophet, inspired by stories of the immense treasures sealed within its depths, journeyed from Bagdad to Cairo, A.D. 820, with a great force of workmen to open the mighty Pyramid. When Caliph al Mamoun first reached the foot of the “Rock of Ages” and gazed up at its smooth glistening surface, a tumult of emotions undoubtedly racked his soul. The casing stones must have been in place at the time of his visit, for the Caliph could find no indication of an entrance—four perfectly smooth surfaces confronted him. Following vague rumors, he set his followers to work on the north side of the Pyramid, with instructions to keep on cutting and chiseling until they discovered something. To the Moslems with their crude instruments and vinegar it was a herculean effort to tunnel a full hundred feet through the limestone. Many times they were on the point of rebellion, but the word of the Caliph was law and the hope of a vast fortune buoyed them up.

At last on the eve of total discouragement fate came to their rescue. A great stone was heard to fall somewhere in the wall near the toiling and disgruntled Arabs. Pushing on toward the sound with renewed enthusiasm, they finally broke into the descending passage which leads into the subterranean chamber. They then chiseled their way around the great stone portcullis which had fallen into a position barring their progress, and attacked and removed one after another the granite plugs which for a while continued to slide down the passage leading from the Queen’s Chamber above.

Finally no more blocks descended and the way was clear for the followers of the Prophet. But where were the treasures? From room to room the frantic workmen rushed, looking in vain for loot. The discontent of the Moslems reached such a height that Caliph al Mamoun—who had inherited much of the wisdom of his illustrious father, the Caliph al Raschid—sent to Bagdad for funds, which he caused to be secretly buried near the entrance of the Pyramid. He then ordered his men to dig at that spot and great was their rejoicing when the treasure was discovered, the workmen being deeply impressed by the wisdom of the antediluvian monarch who had carefully estimated their wages

and thoughtfully caused the exact amount to be buried for their benefit!

The Caliph then returned to the city of his fathers and the Great Pyramid was left to the mercy of succeeding generations. In the ninth century the sun’s rays striking the highly polished surfaces of the original casing stones caused each side of the Pyramid to appear as a dazzling triangle of light. Since that time, all but two of these casing stones have disappeared. Investigation has resulted in their discovery, recut and resurfaced, in the walls of Mohammedan mosques and palaces in various parts of Cairo and its environs.

Pyramid Problems

C. Piazzi Smyth asks: “Was the Great Pyramid, then, erected before the invention of hieroglyphics, and previous to the birth of the Egyptian religion?” Time may yet prove that the upper chambers of the Pyramid were a sealed mystery before the establishment of the Egyptian empire. In the subterranean chamber, however, are markings which indicate that the Romans gained admission there. In the light of the secret philosophy of the Egyptian initiates, W. W. Harmon, by a series of extremely complicated yet exact mathematical calculations, determines that the first ceremonial of the Pyramid was performed 68,890 years ago on the occasion when the star Vega for the first time sent its ray down the descending passage into the pit. The actual building of the Pyramid was accomplished in the period of from ten to fifteen years immediately preceding this date.

While such figures doubtless will evoke the ridicule of modern Egyptologists, they are based upon an exhaustive study of the principles of sidereal mechanics as incorporated into the structure of the Pyramid by its initiated builders. If the casing stones were in position at the beginning of the ninth century, the so-called erosion marks upon the outside were not due to water. The theory also that the salt upon the interior stones of the Pyramid is evidence that the building was once submerged is weakened by the scientific fact that this kind of stone is subject to exudations of salt. While the building may have been submerged, at least in part, during the many thousands of years since its erection, the evidence adduced to prove this point is not conclusive.

The Great Pyramid was built of limestone and granite throughout, the two kinds of rock being combined in a peculiar and significant manner. The stones were trued with the utmost precision, and the cement used was of such remarkable quality that it is now practically as hard as the stone itself. The limestone blocks were sawed with bronze saws, the teeth of which were diamonds or other jewels. The chips from the stones were piled against the north side of the plateau on which the structure stands, where they form an additional buttress to aid in supporting the weight of the structure. The entire Pyramid is an

example of perfect orientation and actually squares the circle. This last is accomplished by dropping a vertical line from the apex of the Pyramid to its base line. If this vertical line be considered as the radius of an imaginary circle, the length of the circumference of such a circle will be found to equal the sum of the base lines of the four sides of the Pyramid.

If the passage leading to the King's Chamber and the Queen's Chamber was sealed up thousands of years before the Christian Era, those later admitted into the Pyramid Mysteries must have received their initiations in subterranean galleries now unknown. Without such galleries there could have been no possible means of ingress or egress, since the single surface entrance was completely closed with casing stones. If not blocked by the mass of the Sphinx or concealed in some part of that image, the secret entrance may be either in one of the adjacent temples or upon the sides of the limestone plateau.

Attention is called to the granite plugs filling the ascending passageway to the Queen's Chamber which Caliph al Mamoun was forced practically to pulverize before he could clear a way into the upper chambers. C. Piazzi Smyth notes that the position of the stones demonstrate that they were set in place from above—which made it necessary for a considerable number of workmen to depart from the upper chambers. How did they do it? Smyth believes they descended through the wall (see diagram), dropping the ramp stone into place behind them. He further contends that robbers probably used the well as a means of getting into the upper chambers. The ramp stone having been set in a bed of plaster, the robbers were forced to break through it, leaving a jagged opening. Mr. Dupré, an architect who has spent years investigating the pyramids, differs from Smyth, however, in that he believes the well itself to be a robbers' hole, being the first successful attempt made to enter the upper chambers from the subterranean chamber, then the only open section of the Pyramid.

Mr. Dupré bases his conclusion upon the fact that the well is merely a rough hole and the grotto an irregular chamber, without any evidence of the architectural precision with which the remainder of the structure was erected. The diameter of the well also precludes the possibility of its having been dug downward; it must have been gouged out from below, and the grotto was necessary to supply air to the thieves. It is inconceivable that the Pyramid builders would break one of their own ramp stones and leave its broken surface and a gaping hole in the side wall of their otherwise perfect gallery. If the well is a robbers' hole, it may explain why the Pyramid was empty when Caliph al Mamoun entered it and what happened to the missing coffer lid. A careful

examination of the so-called unfinished subterranean chamber, which must have been the base of operations for the robbers, might disclose traces of their presence or show where they piled the rubble which must have accumulated as a result of their operations. While it is not entirely clear by what entrance the robbers reached the subterranean chamber, it is improbable that they used the descending passageway.

There is a remarkable niche in the north wall of the Queen's Chamber which the Mohammedan guides glibly pronounce to be a shrine. The general shape of this niche, however, with its walls converging by a series of overlaps like those of the Grand Gallery, would indicate that originally it had been intended as a passageway. Efforts made to explore this niche have been nonproductive, but Mr. Dupré believes an entrance to exist here through which—if the well did not exist at the time—the workmen made their exit through the Pyramid after dropping the stone plugs into the ascending gallery.

Biblical scholars have contributed a number of most extraordinary conceptions regarding the Great Pyramid. This ancient edifice has been identified by them as Joseph's granary (despite its hopelessly inadequate capacity); as the tomb prepared for the unfortunate Pharaoh of the Exodus who could not be buried there because his body was never recovered from the Red Sea; and finally as a perpetual confirmation of the infallibility of the numerous prophecies contained in the Authorized Version!

The Sphinx

Although the Great Pyramid, as Ignatius Donnelly has demonstrated, is patterned after an antediluvian type of architecture, examples of which are to be found in nearly every part of the world, the Sphinx *(Hu)* is typically Egyptian. The stele between its paws states the Sphinx is an image of the Sun God, Harmackis, which was evidently made in the similitude of the Pharaoh during whose reign it was chiseled. The statue was restored and completely excavated by Tahutmes IV as the result of a vision in which the god had appeared and declared himself oppressed by the weight of the sand about his body. The broken beard of the Sphinx was discovered during excavations between the front paws. The steps leading up to the Sphinx and also the temple and altar between the paws are much later additions, probably Roman, for it is known that the Romans reconstructed many Egyptian antiquities. The shallow depression in the crown of the head, once thought to be the terminus of a closed-up passageway leading from the Sphinx to the Great Pyramid, was merely intended to help support a headdress now missing.

Metal rods have been driven into the Sphinx in a vain effort to discover chambers or passages within its body. The major part of the Sphinx is a single stone, but the front paws have been built up of smaller stones. The Sphinx is about 200 feet long, 70 feet high, and 38 feet wide across the shoulders. The main stone from which it was carved is believed by some to have been transported from distant quarries by methods unknown, while others assert it to be native rock, possibly an outcropping somewhat resembling the form into which it was later carved. The theory once advanced that both the Pyramid and the Sphinx were built from artificial stones made on the spot has been abandoned. A careful analysis of the limestone shows it to be composed of small sea creatures called *mummulites.*

The popular supposition that the Sphinx was the true portal of the Great Pyramid, while it survives with surprising tenacity, has never been substantiated. P. Christian presents this theory as follows, basing it in part upon the authority of Iamblichus:

“The Sphinx of Gizeh, says the author of the *Traité des Mystères,* served as the entrance to the sacred subterranean chambers in which the trials of the initiate were undergone. This entrance, obstructed in our day by sands and rubbish, may still be traced between the forelegs of the crouched colossus. It was formerly closed by a bronze gate whose secret spring could be operated only by the Magi. It was guarded by public respect and a sort of religious fear maintained its inviolability better than armed protection would have done. In the belly of the Sphinx were cut out galleries leading to the subterranean part of the Great Pyramid. These galleries were so artfully crisscrossed along their course to the Pyramid that in setting forth into the passage without a guide through this network, one ceaselessly and inevitably returned to the starting point.” (See *Histoire de la Magie.*)

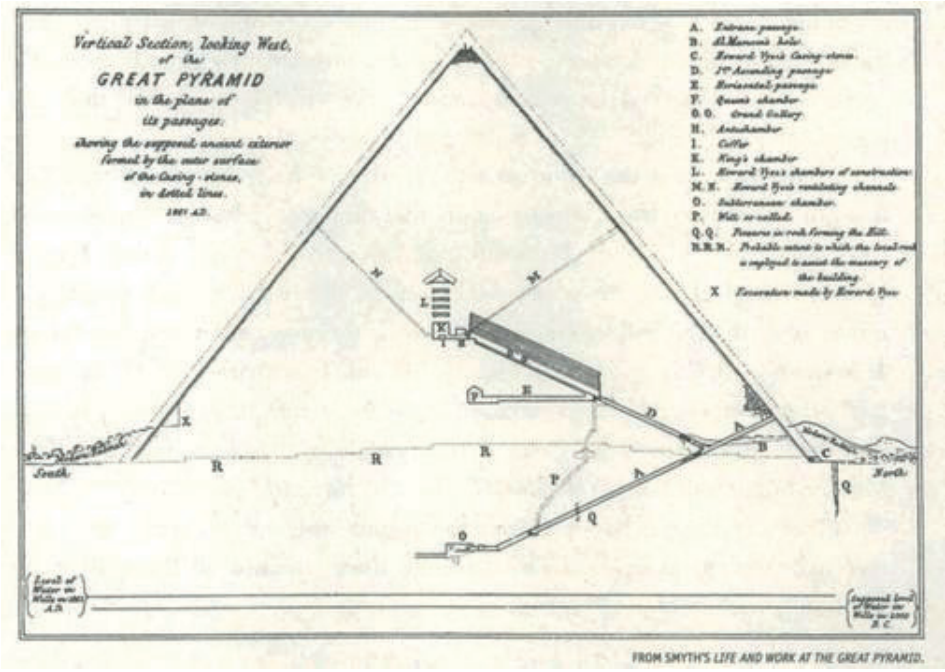
Unfortunately, the bronze door referred to cannot be found, nor is there any evidence that it ever existed. The passing centuries have wrought many changes in the colossus, however, and the original opening may have been closed.

Nearly all students of the subject believe that subterranean chambers exist beneath the Great Pyramid. Robert Ballard writes: “The priests of the Pyramids of Lake Moeris had their vast subterranean residences. It appears to me more than probable that those of Gizeh were similarly provided. And I may go further: —Out of these very caverns may have been excavated the limestone of which the Pyramids were built. * In the bowels of the limestone ridge on which the Pyramids are built will yet be found, I feel convinced, ample information as to their uses. A good diamond drill with two or three hundred feet of rods is what is wanted to test this, and the solidarity of the Pyramids at the same time.” (See *The Solution of the Pyramid Problem.)*

Mr. Ballard’s theory of extensive underground apartments and quarries brings up an important problem in architectonics. The Pyramid builders were too farsighted to endanger the permanence of the Great Pyramid by placing over five million tons of limestone and granite on any but a solid foundation. It is therefore reasonably certain that such chambers or passageways as may exist beneath the building are relatively insignificant, like those within the body of the structure, which occupy less than one sixteen-hundredth of the cubic contents of the Pyramid.

The Sphinx was undoubtedly erected for symbolical purposes at the instigation of the priestcraft. The theories that the uræus upon its forehead was originally the finger of an immense sundial and that both the Pyramid and the Sphinx were used to measure time, the seasons, and the precession of the

equinoxes are ingenious but not wholly convincing. If this great creature was erected to obliterate the ancient passageway leading into the subterranean temple of the Pyramid, its symbolism would be most appropriate. In comparison with the overwhelming size and dignity of the Great Pyramid, the Sphinx is almost insignificant. Its battered face, upon which may still be seen vestiges of the red paint with which the figure was originally covered, is disfigured beyond recognition. Its nose was broken off by a fanatical Mohammedan, lest the follow-ers of the Prophet be led into idolatry. The very nature of its construction and the present repairs necessary to prevent the head from falling off indicate that it could not have survived the great periods of time which have elapsed since the erection of the Pyramid.



FROM SMYTH'S *LIFE AND WORK AT THE GREAT PYRAMID.*

A VERTICAL SECTION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID.

The Great Pyramid stands upon a limestone plateau at the base of which, according to ancient history, the Nile once flowed, thus supplying a method of transportation for the huge blocks used in its construction. Presuming that the capstone was originally in place, the Pyramid is, according to John Taylor, in round figures 486 feet high; the base of each side is 764 feet long, and the entire structure covers a ground area of more than 13 acres.

The Great Pyramid is the only one in the group at Gizeh—in fact, as far as

known, the only one in Egypt—that has chambers within the actual body of the Pyramid itself. For this reason it is said to refute the Lepsius Law, which asserts that each of these structures is a monument raised over a subtenanean chamber in which a ruler is entombed. The Pyramid contains four chambers, which in the diagram are lettered K, H, F, and 0.

The King's Chamber (K) is an oblong apartment 39 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 19 feet high (disregarding fractional parts of a foot in each case), with a flat roof consisting of nine great stones, the largest in the Pyramid. Above the King's Chamber are five low compartments (L), generally termed construction chambers. In the lowest of these the so-called hieroglyphs of the Pharaoh Cheops are located. The roof of the fifth construction chamber is peaked. At the end of the King's Chamber opposite the entrance stands the famous sarcophagus, or coffer (I), and behind it is a shallow opening that was dug in the hope of discovering valuables. Two air vents (M, N) passing through the entire body of the Pyramid ventilate the King's Chamber. In itself this is sufficient to establish that the building was not intended for a tomb.

Between the upper end of the Grand Gallery (G. G.) and the King's Chamber is a small antechamber (H), its extreme length 9 feet, its extreme width 5 feet, and its extreme height 12 feet, with its walls grooved for purposes now unknown. In the groove nearest the Grand Gallery is a slab of stone in two sections, with a peculiar boss or knob protruding about an inch from the surface of the upper part facing the Grand Gallery. This stone does not reach to the floor of the antechamber and those entering the King's Chamber must pass under the slab. From the King's Chamber the Grand Gallery—157 feet in length, 28 feet in height. 7 feet in width at its widest point and decreasing to 3½ feet as the result of seven converging overlaps of the stones forming the walls—descends to a little above the Queen's Chamber. Here a gallery (E) branches off, passing more than 100 feet back towards the center of the Pyramid and opening into the Queen's Chamber (F). The Queen's Chamber is 19 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 20 feet high. Its roof is peaked and composed of great slabs of stone. Air passages not shown lead from the Queen's Chamber, but these were not open originally. In the east wall of the Queen's Chamber is a peculiar niche of gradually converging stone, which, in all likelihood, may prove to be a now lost entrance way.

At the point where the Grand Gallery ends and the horizontal passage towards the Queen's Chamber begins is the entrance to the well and also the opening leading down the first ascending passage (D) to the point where this passage

meets the descending passage (A) leading from the outer wall of the Pyramid down to the subterranean chamber. After descending 59 feet down the well (P), the grotto is reached. Continuing through the floor of the grotto the well leads downward 133 feet to the descending entrance passage (A), which it meets a short distance before this passage becomes horizontal and leads into the subterranean chamber.

The subterranean chamber (0) is about 46 feet long and 27 feet wide, but is extremely low, the ceiling varying in height from a little over 3 feet to about 13 feet from the rough and apparently unfinished floor. From the south side of the subterranean chamber a low tunnel runs about 50 feet and then meets a blank wall. These constitute the only known openings in the Pyramid, with the exception of a few niches, exploration holes, blind passages, and the rambling cavernous tunnel (8) hewn out by the Moslems under the leadership of the Prophet's descendant, Caliph al Mamoun.

To the Egyptians, the Sphinx was the symbol of strength and intelligence. It was portrayed as androgynous to signify that they recognized the initiates and gods as partaking of both the positive and negative creative powers. Gerald Massey writes: "This is the secret of the Sphinx. The orthodox sphinx of Egypt is masculine in front and feminine behind. So is the image of Sut-Typhon, a type of horn and tail, male in front and female behind. The Pharaohs, who wore the tail of the Lioness or Cow behind them, were male in front and female behind. Like the Gods they included the dual totality of Being in one person, born of the Mother, but of *both sexes as the Child."* (See *The Natural Genesis.)*

Most investigators have ridiculed the Sphinx and, without even deigning to investigate the great colossus, have turned their attention to the most overwhelming mystery of the Pyramid.

The Pyramid Mysteries

The word *pyramid* is popularly supposed to be derived from πρ, *fire*, thus signifying that it is the symbolic representation of the One Divine Flame, the life of every creature. John Taylor believes the word *pyramid* to mean a "measure of wheat," while C. Piazzi Smyth favors the Coptic meaning, "a division into ten." The initiates of old accepted the pyramid form as the ideal symbol of both the secret doctrine and chose institutions established for its dissemination. Both pyramids and mounds are antitypes of the Holy Mountain, or High Place of God, which was believed to stand in the "midst" of the earth. John P. Lundy relates the Great Pyramid to the fabled Olympus, further assuming that its subterranean passages correspond to the tortuous byways of Hades.

The square base of the Pyramid is a constant reminder that the House of Wisdom is firmly founded upon Nature and her immutable laws. "The Gnostics," writes Albert Pike, "claimed that the whole edifice of their science rested on a square whose angles were: Σγη, Silence; Βυθος, Profundity; Νους, Intelligence; Αληθεα, Truth." (See *Morals and Dogma.)* The sides of the Great Pyramid face the four cardinal angles, the latter signifying according to Eliphas Levi the extremities of heat and cold (south and north) and the extremities of light and darkness (east and west). The base of the Pyramid further represents the four material elements or substances from the combinations of which the quaternary body of man is formed. From each side of the square there rises a triangle, typifying the threefold divine being enthroned within every quaternary material nature. If each base line be considered a square from which ascends a threefold spiritual power, then the sum of the lines of the four faces (12) and the four hypothetical squares (16) constituting the base is 28, the sacred number of the lower world. If this be added to the three septenaries composing the sun (21), it equals 49, the square of 7 and the number of the universe.

The twelve signs of the zodiac, like the Governors of the lower worlds, are symbolized by the twelve lines of the four triangles—of the faces of the Pyramid. In the midst of each face is one of the beasts of Ezekiel, and the structure as a whole becomes the Cherubim. The three main chambers of the

Pyramid are related to the heart, the brain, and the generative system—the spiritual centers of the human constitution. The triangular form of the Pyramid also is similar to the posture assumed by the body during the ancient meditative exercises. The Mysteries taught that the divine energies from the gods descended upon the top of the Pyramid, which was likened to an inverted tree with its branches below and its roots at the apex. From this inverted tree the divine wisdom is disseminated by streaming down the diverging sides and radiating throughout the world.

The size of the capstone of the Great Pyramid cannot be accurately determined, for, while most investigators have assumed that it was once in place, no vestige of it now remains. There is a curious tendency among the builders of great religious edifices to leave their creations unfinished, thereby signifying that God alone is complete. The capstone—if it existed—was itself a miniature pyramid, the apex of which again would be capped by a smaller block of similar shape, and so on *ad infinitum*. The capstone therefore is the epitome of the entire structure. Thus, the Pyramid may be likened to the universe and the capstone to man. Following the chain of analogy, the mind is the capstone of man, the spirit the capstone of the mind, and God—the epitome of the whole—the capstone of the spirit. As a rough and unfinished block, man is taken from the quarry and by the secret culture of the Mysteries gradually transformed into a trued and perfect pyramidal capstone. The temple is complete only when the initiate himself becomes the living apex through which the divine power is focused into the diverging structure below.

W. Marsham Adams calls the Great Pyramid “the House of the Hidden Places”; such indeed it was, for it represented the inner sanctuary of pre-Egyptian wisdom. By the Egyptians the Great Pyramid was associated with Hermes, the god of wisdom and letters and the Divine Illuminator worshiped through the planet Mercury. Relating Hermes to the Pyramid emphasizes anew the fact that it was in reality the supreme temple of the Invisible and Supreme Deity. The Great Pyramid was not a lighthouse, an observatory, or a tomb, but the first temple of the Mysteries, the first structure erected as a repository for those secret truths which are the certain foundation of all arts and sciences. It was the perfect emblem of the *microcosm* and the *macrocosm* and, according to the secret teachings, the tomb of Osiris, the black god of the Nile. Osiris represents a certain manifestation of solar energy, and therefore his house or tomb is emblematic of the universe within which he is entombed and upon the cross of which he is crucified.

Through the mystic passageways and chambers of the Great Pyramid passed the illumined of antiquity. They entered its portals as *men;* they came forth as *gods.* It was the place of the "second birth," the "womb of the Mysteries," and wisdom dwelt in it as God dwells in the hearts of men. Somewhere in the depths of its recesses there resided an unknown being who was called "The Initiator," or "The Illustrious One," robed in blue and gold and bearing in his hand the sevenfold key of Eternity. This was the lion-faced hierophant, the Holy One, the Master of Masters, who never left the House of Wisdom and whom no man ever saw save he who had passed through the gates of preparation and purification. It was in these chambers that Plato—he of the broad brow—came face to face with the wisdom of the ages personified in the Master of the Hidden House.

Who was the Master dwelling in the mighty Pyramid, the many rooms of which signified the worlds in space; the Master whom none might behold save those who had been "born again"? He alone fully knew the secret of the Pyramid, but he has departed the way of the wise and the house is empty. The hymns of praise no longer echo in muffled tones through the chambers; the neophyte no longer passes through the elements and wanders among the seven stars; the candidate no longer receives the "Word of Life" from the lips of the Eternal One. Nothing now remains that the eye of man can see but an empty shell—the outer symbol of an inner truth—and men call the House of God a tomb!

The technique of the Mysteries was unfolded by the Sage Illuminator, the Master of the Secret House. The power to know his guardian spirit was revealed to the new initiate; the method of disentangling his material body from his divine vehicle was explained; and to consummate the *magnum opus,* there was revealed the Divine Name—the secret and unutterable designation of the Supreme Deity, by the very knowledge of which man and his God are made consciously one. With the giving of the Name, the new initiate became himself a *pyramid,* within the chambers of whose soul numberless other human beings might also receive spiritual enlightenment.

In the King's Chamber was enacted the drama of the "second death." Here the candidate, after being crucified upon the cross of the solstices and the equinoxes, was buried in the great coffer. There is a profound mystery to the atmosphere and temperature of the King's Chamber: it is of a peculiar deathlike cold which cuts to the marrow of the bone. This room was a doorway between the material world and the transcendental spheres of Nature. While his body lay in the coffer, the soul of the neophyte soared as a human-headed hawk through the celestial

realms, there to discover first hand the eternity of Life, Light, and Truth, as well as the illusion of Death, Darkness, and Sin. Thus in one sense the Great Pyramid may be likened to a gate through which the ancient priests permitted a few to pass toward the attainment of individual completion. It is also to be noted incidentally that if the coffer in the King's Chamber be struck, the sound emitted has no counterpart in any known musical scale. This tonal value may have formed part of that combination of circumstances which rendered the King's Chamber an ideal setting for the conferment of the highest degree of the Mysteries.

The modern world knows little of these ancient rites. The scientist and the theologian alike gaze upon the sacred structure, wondering what fundamental urge inspired the herculean labor. If they would but think for a moment, they would realize that there is only one urge in the soul of man capable of supplying the required incentive—namely, the desire to know, to understand, and to exchange the narrowness of human mortality for the greater breadth and scope of divine enlightenment. So men say of the Great Pyramid that it is the most perfect building in the world, the source of weights and measures, the original Noah's Ark, the origin of languages, alphabets, and scales of temperature and humidity. Few realize, however, that it is the gateway to the Eternal.

Though the modern world may know a million secrets, the ancient world knew one—and that one was greater than the million; for the *million* secrets breed death, disaster, sorrow, selfishness, lust, and avarice, but the one secret confers life, light, and truth. The time will come when the secret wisdom shall again be the dominating religious and philosophical urge of the world. The day is at hand when the doom of dogma shall be sounded. The great theological Tower of Babel, with its confusion of tongues, was built of bricks of mud and the mortar of slime. Out of the cold ashes of lifeless creeds, however, shall rise *phoenixlike* the ancient Mysteries. No other institution has so completely satisfied the religious aspirations of humanity, for since the destruction of the Mysteries there never has been a religious code to which Plato could have subscribed. The unfolding of man's spiritual nature is as much an exact science as astronomy, medicine or jurisprudence. To accomplish this end religions were primarily established; and out of religion have come science, philosophy, and logic as methods whereby this divine purpose might be realized.

The Dying God shall rise again! The secret room in the House of the Hidden Places shall be rediscovered. The Pyramid again shall stand as the ideal emblem of solidarity, inspiration, aspiration, resurrection, and regeneration. As the

passing sands of time bury civilization upon civilization beneath their weight, the Pyramid shall remain as the visible covenant between Eternal Wisdom and the world. The time may yet come when the chants of the illumined shall be heard once more in its ancient passageways and the Master of the Hidden House shall await in the Silent Place for the coming of that man who, casting aside the fallacies of dogma and tenet, seeks simply Truth and will be satisfied with neither substitute nor counterfeit.

VIII

Isis the Virgin of the World

It is especially fitting that a study of Hermetic symbolism should begin with a discussion of the symbols and attributes of the *Saitic Isis.* This is the Isis of Sais, famous for the inscription concerning her which appeared on the front of her temple in that city: *"I, Isis, am all that has been, that is or shall be; no mortal Man hath ever me unveiled."*

Plutarch affirms that many ancient authors believed this goddess to be the daughter of Hermes; others held the opinion that she was the child of Prometheus. Both of these demigods were noted for their divine wisdom. It is not improbable that her kinship to them is merely allegorical. Plutarch translates the name Isis to mean *wisdom.* Godfrey Higgins, in his *Anacalypsis*, derives the name of *Isis* from the Hebrew יש, Iso, and the Greek ξωω, *to save.* Some authorities, however, for example, Richard Payne Knight (as stated in his *Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*), believe the word to be of Northern extraction, possibly Scandinavian or Gothic. In these languages the name is pronounced *Isa,* meaning ice, or water in its most passive, crystallized, negative state.

This Egyptian deity under many names appears as the principle of natural fecundity among nearly all the religions of the ancient world. She was known as the goddess with ten thousand appellations and was metamorphosed by Christianity into the Virgin Mary, for Isis, although she gave birth to all living things—chief among them the Sun—still remained a virgin, according to the legendary accounts.

Apuleius in the eleventh book of *The Golden Ass* ascribes to the goddess the following statement concerning her powers and attributes: "Behold, , I, moved by thy prayers, am present with thee; I, who am Nature, the parent of things, the queen of all the elements, the primordial progeny of ages, the supreme of

Divinities, the sovereign of the spirits of the dead, the first of the celestials, and the uni-form resemblance of Gods and Goddesses. I, who rule by my nod the luminous summits of the heavens, the salubrious breezes of the sea, and the deplorable silences of the realms beneath and whose one divinity the whole orb of the earth venerates under a manifold form, by different rites and a variety of appellations. Hence the primogenial Phrygians call me Pessinuntica, the mother of the Gods; the Attic Aborigines, Cecropian Minerva; the floating Cyprians, Paphian Venus; arrow-bearing Cretans, Diana Dictynna; the three-tongued Sicilians, Stygian Proserpine; and the Eleusinians, the ancient Goddess Ceres. Some also call me Juno, others Bellona, others Hecate, and others Rhamnusia. And those who are illuminated by the incipient rays of that divinity the Sun, when he rises, *viz.* the Ethiopians, the Arii, and the Egyptians skilled in ancient learning, worshipping me by ceremonies perfectly appropriate, call me by my true name, Queen Isis."

FROM MOSAIZE HISTORIE DER HEBREEUWSE KERKE.

ISIS, QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

Diodorus writes of a famous inscription carved on a column at Nysa, in Arabia, wherein Isis described herself as follows: “I am Isis, Queen of this country. I was instructed by Mercury. No one can destroy the laws which I have established. I am the eldest daughter of Saturn, most ancient of the gods. I am the wife and sister of Osiris the King. I first made known to mortals the use of wheat. I am the mother of Orus the King. In my honor was the city of Bubaste built. Rejoice, 0 Egypt, rejoice, Land that gave me birth!” (See “Morals and Dogma,” by Albert Pike.)

Le Plongeon believes that the Egyptian myth of Isis had a historical basis among the Mayas of Central America, where this goddess was known as Queen Moo. In Prince Coh the same author finds a correspondence to Osiris, the brother-husband of Isis. Le Plongeon’s theory is that Mayan civilization was far more ancient than that of Egypt. After the death of Prince Coh, his widow, Queen Moo, fleeing to escape the wrath of his murderers, sought refuge among the Mayan colonies in Egypt, where she was accepted as their queen and was given the name of *Isis.* While Le Plongeon may be right, the possible historical queen sinks into insignificance when compared with the allegorical, symbolic World Virgin; and the fact that she appears among so many different races and peoples discredits the theory that she was a historical individual.

According to Sextus Empyricus, the Trojan war was fought over a statue of the moon goddess. For this lunar Helena, and not for a woman, the Greeks and Trojans struggled at the gates of Troy.

Several authors have attempted to prove that Isis, Osiris, Typhon, Neph-thys, and Aroueris (Thoth, or Mercury) were grandchildren of the great Jewish patriarch Noah by his son Ham. But as the story of Noah and his ark is a cosmic allegory concerning the repopulation of planets at the beginning of each world period, this only makes it less likely that they were historical personages. According to Robert Fludd, the sun has three properties—*life, light,* and *heat.* These three vivify and vitalize the three worlds—spiritual, intellectual, and material. Therefore, it is said *“from one light, three lights,”* i. e., the first three Master Masons. In all probability, Osiris represents the third, or material, aspect of solar activity, which by its beneficent influences vitalizes and enlivens the flora and fauna of the earth. Osiris is not the sun, but the sun is symbolic of the vital principle of Nature, which the ancients knew as Osiris. His symbol,

therefore, was an opened eye, in honor of the Great Eye of the universe, the sun. Opposed to the active, radiant principle of impregnating fire, heat, and motion was the passive, receptive principle of Nature.

Modern science has proved that forms ranging in magnitude from solar systems to atoms are composed of positive, radiant nuclei surrounded by negative bodies that exist upon the emanations of the central life. From this allegory we have the story of Solomon and his wives, for Solomon is the sun and his wives and concubines are the planets, moons, asteroids, and other receptive bodies within his house—the solar mansion. Isis, represented in the Song of Solomon by the dark maid of Jerusalem, is symbolic of receptive Nature—the watery, maternal principle which creates all things out of herself after impregnation has been achieved by the virility of the sun.

In the ancient world the year had 360 days. The five extra days were gathered together by the God of Cosmic Intelligence to serve as the birthdays of the five gods and goddesses who are called the sons and daughters of Ham. Upon the first of these special days Osiris was born and upon the fourth of them Isis. (The number *four* shows the relation that this goddess bears to the earth and its elements.) Typhon, the Egyptian Demon or Spirit of the Adversary, was born upon the third day. Typhon is often symbolized by a crocodile; sometimes his body is a combination of crocodile and hog. Isis stands for knowledge and wisdom, and according to Plutarch the word *Typhon* means *insolence* and *pride.* Egotism, self-centeredness, and pride are the deadly enemies of understanding and truth. This part of the allegory is revealed.

After Osiris, here symbolized as the sun, had become King of Egypt and had given to his people the full advantage of his intellectual light, he continued his path through the heavens, visiting the peoples of other nations and converting all with whom he came in contact. Plutarch further asserts that the Greeks recognized in Osiris the same person whom they revered under the names of *Dionysos* and *Bacchus.* While he was away from his country, his brother, Typhon, the Evil One, like the Loki of Scandinavia, plotted against the Sun God to destroy him. Gathering seventy-two persons as fellow conspirators, he attained his nefarious end in a most subtle manner. He had a wonderful ornamented box made just the size of the body of Osiris. This he brought into a banquet hall where the gods and goddesses were feasting together. All admired the beautiful chest, and Typhon promised to give it to the one whose body fitted it most perfectly. One after another lay down in the box, but in disappointment rose again, until at last Osiris also tried. The moment he was in the chest Typhon

and his accomplices nailed the cover down and sealed the cracks with molten lead. They then cast the box into the Nile, down which it floated to the sea. Plutarch states that the date upon which this occurred was the seventeenth day of the month Athyr, when the sun was in the constellation of Scorpio. This is most significant, for the Scorpion is the symbol of treachery. The time when Osiris entered the chest was also the same season that Noah entered the ark to escape from the Deluge.

Plutarch further declares that the Pans and Satyrs (the Nature spirits and elementals) first discovered that Osiris had been murdered. These immediately raised an alarm, and from this incident the word *panic*, meaning *fright* or *amazement* of the multitudes, originated. Isis, upon receiving the news of her husband's murder, which she learned from some children who had seen the murderers making off with the box, at once robed herself in mourning and started forth in quest of him.

At length Isis discovered that the chest had floated to the coast of Byblos. There it had lodged in the branches of a tree, which in a short time miraculously grew up around the box. This so amazed the king of that country that he ordered the tree to be cut down and a pillar made from its trunk to support the roof of his palace. Isis, visiting Byblos, recovered the body of her husband, but it was again stolen by Typhon, who cut it into fourteen parts, which he scattered all over the earth. Isis, in despair, began gathering up the severed remains of her husband, but found only thirteen pieces. The fourteenth part (the phallus) she reproduced in gold, for the original had fallen into the river Nile and had been swallowed by a fish.

Typhon was later slain in battle by the son of Osiris. Some of the Egyptians believed that the souls of the gods were taken to heaven, where they shone forth as stars. It was supposed that the soul of Isis gleamed from the Dog Star, while Typhon became the constellation of the Bear. It is doubtful, however, whether this idea was ever generally accepted.

Among the Egyptians, Isis is often represented with a headdress consisting of the empty throne chair of her murdered husband, and this peculiar structure was accepted during certain dynasties as her hieroglyphic. The headdresses of the Egyptians have great symbolic and emblematic importance, for they represent the auric bodies of the superhuman intelligences, and are used in the same way that the nimbus, halo, and aureole are used in Christian religious art. Frank C. Higgins, a well-known Masonic symbolist, has astutely noted that the ornate headgears of certain gods and Pharaohs are inclined backward at the same angle

as the earth's axis. The robes, insignia, jewels, and ornamentations of the ancient hierophants symbolized the spiritual energies radiating from the human body. Modern science is rediscovering many of the lost secrets of Hermetic philosophy. One of these is the ability to gauge the mental development, the soul qualities, and the physical health of an individual from the streamers of semi-visible electric force which pour through the surface of the skin of every human being at all times during his life. (For details concerning a scientific process for making the auric emanations visible, see *The Human Atmosphere* by Dr. Walter J. Kilner.)

Isis is sometimes symbolized by the head of a cow; occasionally the entire animal is her symbol. The first gods of the Scandinavians were licked out of blocks of ice by the Mother Cow (Audhumla), who symbolized the principle of natural nutriment and fecundity because of her milk. Occasionally Isis is represented as a bird. She often carries in one hand the *crux ansata,* the symbol of eternal life, and in the other the flowered scepter, symbolic of her authority.

Thoth Hermes Trismegistus, the founder of Egyptian learning, the Wise Man of the ancient world, gave to the priests and philosophers of antiquity the secrets which have been preserved to this day in myth and legend. These allegories and emblematic figures conceal the secret formulae for spiritual, mental, moral, and physical regeneration commonly known as the Mystic Chemistry of the Soul (alchemy). These sublime truths were communicated to the initiates of the Mystery Schools, but were concealed from the profane. The latter, unable to understand the abstract philosophical tenets, worshiped the concrete sculptured idols which were emblematic of these secret truths. The wisdom and secrecy of Egypt are epitomized in the Sphinx, which has preserved its secret from the seekers of a hundred generations. The mysteries of Hermeticism, the great spiritual truths hidden from the world by the ignorance of the world, and the keys of the secret doctrines of the ancient philosophers, are all symbolized by the Virgin Isis. Veiled from head to foot, she reveals her wisdom only to the tried and initiated few who have earned the right to enter her sacred presence, tear from the veiled figure of Nature its shroud of obscurity, and stand face to face with the Divine Reality.

The explanations in these pages of the symbols peculiar to the Virgin Isis are based (unless otherwise noted) on selections from a free translation of the fourth book of *Bibliothèque des Philosophes Hermétiques,* entitled "The Hermetical Signification of the Symbols and Attributes of Isis," with interpolations by the compiler to amplify and clarify the text.

The statues of Isis were decorated with the sun, moon, and stars, and many emblems pertaining to the earth, over which Isis was believed to rule (as the guardian spirit of Nature personified). Several images of the goddess have been found upon which the marks of her dignity and position were still intact. According to the ancient philosophers, she personified Universal Nature, the mother of all productions. The deity was generally represented as a partly nude woman, often pregnant, sometimes loosely covered with a garment either of green or black color, or of four different shades intermingled—black, white, yellow, and red.

Apuleius describes her as follows: “In the first place, then, her most copious and long hairs, being gradually intorted, and promiscuously scattered on her divine neck, were softly defluous. A multiform crown, consisting of various flowers, bound the sublime summit of her head. And in the middle of the crown, just on her forehead, there was a smooth orb resembling a mirror, or rather a white refulgent light, which indicated that she was the moon. Vipers rising up after the manner of furrows, environed the crown on the right hand and on the left, and Cerealian ears of corn were also extended from above. Her garment was of many colours, and woven from the finest flax, and was at one time lucid with a white splendour, at another yellow from the flower of crocus, and at another flaming with a rosy redness. But that which most excessively dazzled my sight, was a very black robe, fulgid with a dark splendour, and which, spreading round and passing under her right side, and ascending to her left shoulder, there rose protuberant like the center of a shield, the dependent part of the robe falling in many folds, and having small knots of fringe, gracefully flowing in its extremities. Glittering stars were dispersed through the embroidered border of the robe, and through the whole of its surface: and the full moon, shining in the middle of the stars, breathed forth flaming fires. Nevertheless, a crown, wholly consisting of flowers and fruits of every kind, adhered with indivisible connexion to the border of that conspicuous robe, in all its undulating motions. What she carried in her hands also consisted of things of a very different nature. For her right hand, indeed, bore a brazen rattle [sistrum] through the narrow lamina of which bent like a belt, certain rods passing, produced a sharp triple sound, through the vibrating motion of her arm. An oblong vessel, in the shape of a boat, depended from her left hand, on the handle of which, in that part in which it was conspicuous, an asp raised its erect head and largely swelling neck. And shoes woven from the leaves of the victorious palm tree covered her immortal feet.”

The green color alludes to the vegetation which covers the face of the earth,

and therefore represents the robe of Nature. The black represents death and corruption as being the way to a new life and generation. “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 3.) White, yellow, and red signify the three principal colors of the alchemical, Hermetical, universal medicine after the blackness of its putrefaction is over.

The ancients gave the name *Isis* to one of their occult medicines; therefore the description here given relates somewhat to chemistry. Her black drape also signifies that the moon, or the lunar humidity—the sophic universal mercury and the operating substance of Nature in alchemical terminology—has no light of its own, but receives its light, its fire, and its vitalizing force from the sun. Isis was the image or representative of the great works of the wise men: the Philosopher’s Stone, the Elixir of Life, and the Universal Medicine.

Other hieroglyphics seen in connection with Isis are no less curious than those already described, but it is impossible to enumerate all, for many symbols were used interchangeably by the Egyptian Hermetists. The goddess often wore upon her head a hat made of cypress branches, to signify mourning for her dead husband and also for the physical death which she caused every creature to undergo in order to receive a new life in posterity or a periodic resurrection. The head of Isis is sometimes ornamented with a crown of gold or a garland of olive leaves, as conspicuous marks of her sovereignty as queen of the world and mistress of the entire universe. The crown of gold signifies also the aurific unctuosity or sulphurous fatness of the solar and vital fires which she dispenses to every individual by a continual circulation of the elements, this circulation being symbolized by the musical rattle which she carries in her hand. This sistrum is also the yonic symbol of purity.

A serpent interwoven among the olive leaves on her head, devouring its own tail, denotes that the aurific unctuosity was soiled with the venom of terrestrial corruption which surrounded it and must be mortified and purified by seven planetary circulations or purifications called *flying eagles* (alchemical terminology) in order to make it medicinal for the restoration of health. (Here the emanations from the sun are recognized as a medicine for the healing of human ills.) The seven planetary circulations are represented by the circumambulations of the Masonic lodge; by the marching of the Jewish priests seven times around the walls of Jericho, and of the Mohammedan priests seven times around the Kabba at Mecca. From the crown of gold project three horns of plenty, signifying the abundance of the gifts of Nature proceeding from one root having its origin in the heavens (head of Isis).

In this figure the pagan naturalists represent all the vital powers of the three kingdoms and families of sublunary nature—mineral, plant, and animal (man considered as an animal). At one of her ears was the moon and at the other the sun, to indicate that these two were the agent and patient, or father and mother principles of all natural objects; and that Isis, or Nature, makes use of these two luminaries to communicate her powers to the whole empire of animals, vegetables, and minerals. On the back of her neck were the characters of the planets and the signs of the zodiac which assisted the planets in their functions. This signified that the heavenly influences directed the destinies of the principles and sperms of all things, because they were the governors of all sublunary bodies, which they transformed into little worlds made in the image of the greater universe.

Isis holds in her right hand a small sailing ship with the spindle of a spinning wheel for its mast. From the top of the mast projects a water jug, its handle shaped like a serpent swelled with venom. This indicates that Isis steers the bark of life, full of troubles and miseries, on the stormy ocean of Time. The spindle symbolizes the fact that she spins and cuts the thread of Life. These emblems further signify that Isis abounds in humidity, by means of which she nourishes all natural bodies, preserving them from the heat of the sun by humidifying them with nutritious moisture from the atmosphere. Moisture supports vegetation, but this subtle humidity (life ether) is always more or less infected by some venom proceeding from corruption or decay. It must be purified by being brought into contact with the invisible cleansing fire of Nature. This fire digests, perfects, and revitalizes this substance, in order that the humidity may become a universal medicine to heal and renew all the bodies in Nature.

The serpent throws off its skin annually and is thereby renewed (symbolic of the resurrection of the spiritual life from the material nature). This renewal of the earth takes place every spring, when the vivifying spirit of the sun returns to the countries of the Northern Hemisphere.

The symbolic Virgin carries in her left hand a sistrum and a cymbal, or square frame of metal, which when struck gives the keynote of Nature (Fa); sometimes also an olive branch, to indicate the harmony she preserves among natural things with her regenerating power. By the processes of death and corruption she gives life to a number of creatures of diverse forms through periods of perpetual change. The cymbal is made square instead of the usual triangular shape in order to symbolize that all things are transmuted and regenerated according to the harmony of the four elements.

Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom believed that if a physician could establish harmony among the elements of earth, fire, air, and water, and unite them into a stone (the Philosopher's Stone) symbolized by the six-pointed star or two interlaced triangles, he would possess the means of healing all disease. Dr. Bacstrom further stated that there was no doubt in his mind that the universal, omnipresent fire (spirit) of Nature "does all and is all in all." By attraction, repulsion, motion, heat, sublimation, evaporation, exsiccation, inspissation, coagulation, and fixation, the Universal Fire (Spirit) manipulates matter, and manifests throughout creation. Any individual who can understand these principles and adapt them to the three departments of Nature becomes a true philosopher.

From the right breast of Isis protruded a bunch of grapes and from the left an ear of corn or a sheaf of wheat, golden in color. These indicate that Nature is the source of nutrition for plant, animal, and human life, nourishing all things from herself. The golden color in the wheat (corn) indicates that in the sunlight or spiritual gold is concealed the first sperm of all life.

On the girdle surrounding the upper part of the body of the statue appear a number of mysterious emblems. The girdle is joined together in front by four golden plates (the elements), placed in the form of a square. This signified that Isis, or Nature, the first matter (alchemical terminology), was the essence of the four elements (life, light, heat, and force), which quintessence generated all things. Numerous stars are represented on this girdle, thereby indicating their influence in darkness as well as the influence of the sun in light. Isis is the Virgin immortalized in the constellation of Virgo, where the World Mother is placed with the serpent under her feet and a crown of stars on her head. In her arms she carries a sheaf of grain and sometimes the young Sun God.

The statue of Isis was placed on a pedestal of dark stone ornamented with rams' heads. Her feet trod upon a number of venomous reptiles. This indicates that Nature has power to free from acidity or saltness all corrosives and to overcome all impurities from terrestrial corruption adhering to bodies. The rams' heads indicate that the most auspicious time for the generation of life is during the period when the sun passes through the sign of Aries. The serpents under her feet indicate that Nature is inclined to preserve life and to heal disease by expelling impurities and corruption.

In this sense the axioms known to the ancient philosophers are verified; namely:

Nature contains Nature;

Nature rejoices in her own nature;
Nature surmounts Nature;
Nature cannot be amended but in her own nature.

Therefore, in contemplating the statue of Isis, we must not lose sight of the occult sense of its allegories; otherwise, the Virgin remains an inexplicable enigma.

From a golden ring on her left arm a line descends, to the end of which is suspended a deep box filled with flaming coals and incense. Isis, or Nature personified, carries with her the sacred fire, religiously preserved and kept burning in a special temple by the vestal virgins. This fire is the genuine, immortal flame of Nature—ethereal, essential, the author of life. The inconsumable oil, the balsam of life, so much praised by the wise and so often referred to in the Scriptures, is frequently symbolized as the fuel of this immortal flame.

From the right arm of the figure also descends a thread, to the end of which is fastened a pair of scales, to denote the exactitude of Nature in her weights and measures. Isis is often represented as the symbol of Justice, because Nature is eternally consistent.

The World Virgin is sometimes shown standing between two great pillars—the Jachin and Boaz of Freemasonry—symbolizing the fact that Nature attains productivity by means of polarity. As wisdom personified, Isis stands between the pillars of opposites, demonstrating that understanding is always found at the point of equilibrium and that truth is often crucified between the two thieves of apparent contradiction.

The sheen of gold in her dark hair indicates that while she is lunar, her power is due to the sun's rays, from which she secures her ruddy complexion. As the moon is robed in the reflected light of the sun, so Isis, like the virgin of Revelation, is clothed in the glory of solar luminosity. Apuleius states that while he was sleeping he beheld the venerable goddess Isis rising out of the ocean. The ancients realized that the primary forms of life first came out of water, and modern science concurs in this view. H. G. Wells, in his *Outline of History,* describing primitive life on the earth, states: "But though the ocean and inter-tidal water already swarmed with life, the land above the high-tide line was still, so far as we can guess, a stony wilderness without a trace of life." In the next chapter he adds: "Wherever the shore-line ran there was life, and that life went

on in and by and with water as its home, its medium, and its fundamental necessity." The ancients believed that the universal sperm proceeded with warm vapor, humid but fiery. The veiled Isis, whose very coverings represent vapor, is symbolic of this humidity, which is the carrier or vehicle for the sperm life of the sun, represented by a child in her arms. Because the sun, moon, and stars in setting appear to sink into the sea and also because the water receives their rays into itself, the sea was believed to be the breeding ground for the sperm of living things. The sperm is generated from the combination of the influences of the celestial bodies; hence Isis is sometimes represented as pregnant.

Frequently the statue of Isis was accompanied by the figure of a large black and white ox. The ox represents either Osiris as Taurus, the bull of the zodiac, or Apis, an animal sacred to Osiris because of its peculiar markings and colorings. Among the Egyptians, the bull was a beast of burden. Hence the presence of the animal was a reminder of the labors patiently performed by Nature that all creatures may have life and health. Harpocrates, the God of Silence, holding his fingers to his mouth, often accompanies the statue of Isis. He warns all to keep the secrets of the wise from those unfit to know them.

The Druids of Britain and Gaul had a deep knowledge concerning the mysteries of Isis and worshiped her under the symbol of the moon. Godfrey Higgins considers it a mistake to regard Isis as synonymous with the moon. The moon was chosen for Isis because of its dominion over water. The Druids considered the sun to be the father and the moon the mother of all things. By means of these symbols they worshiped Universal Nature.

The figure of Isis is sometimes used to represent the occult and magical arts, such as necromancy, invocation, sorcery, and thaumaturgy. In one of the myths concerning her, Isis is said to have conjured the invincible God of Eternities, *Ra,* to tell her his secret and sacred name, which he did. This name is equivalent to the Lost Word of Masonry. By means of this Word, a magician can demand obedience from the invisible and superior deities. The priests of Isis became adepts in the use of the unseen forces of Nature. They understood hypnotism, mesmerism, and similar practices long before the modern world dreamed of their existence.

Plutarch describes the requisites of a follower of Isis in this manner: "For as 'tis not the length of the beard, or the coarseness of the habit which makes a philosopher, so neither will those frequent shavings, or the mere wearing [of] a linen vestment constitute a votary of Isis; but he alone is a true servant or follower of this Goddess, who after he has heard, and been made acquainted in a

proper manner with the history of the actions of these Gods, searches into the hidden truths which lie concealed under them, and examines the whole by the dictates of reason and philosophy."

During the Middle Ages the troubadours of Central Europe preserved in song the legends of this Egyptian goddess. They composed sonnets to the most beautiful woman in the world. Though few ever discovered her identity, she was *Sophia*, the Virgin of Wisdom, whom all the philosophers of the world have wooed. Isis represents the mystery of motherhood, which the ancients recognized as the most apparent proof of Nature's omniscient wisdom and God's overshadowing power. To the modern seeker she is the epitome of the Great Unknown, and only those who unveil her will be able to solve the mysteries of life, death, generation, and regeneration.

Mummification of the Egyptian Dead

Servius, commenting on Virgil's *Æneid,* observes that "the wise Egyptians took care to embalm their bodies, and deposit them in catacombs, in order that the soul might be preserved for a long time in connection with the body, and might not soon be alienated; while the Romans, with an opposite design, committed the remains of their dead to the funeral pyre, intending that the vital spark might immediately be restored to the general element, or return to its pristine nature." (From Prichard's *An Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology*.) No complete records are available which give the secret doctrine of the Egyptians concerning the relationship existing between the spirit, or consciousness, and the body which it inhabited. It is reasonably certain, however, that Pythagoras, who had been initiated in the Egyptian temples, when he promulgated the doctrine of metempsychosis, restated, in part at least, the teachings of the Egyptian initiates. The popular supposition that the Egyptians mummified their dead in order to preserve the form for a physical resurrection is untenable in the light of modern knowledge regarding their philosophy of death. In the fourth book of *On Abstinence from Animal Food,* Porphyry describes an Egyptian custom of purifying the dead by removing the contents of the abdominal cavity, which they placed in a separate chest. He then reproduces the following oration which had been translated out of the Egyptian tongue by Euphantus: "O sovereign Sun, and all ye Gods who impart life to men, receive me, and deliver me to the eternal Gods as a cohabitant. For I have always piously worshipped those divinities which were pointed out to me by my parents as long as I lived in this age, and have likewise always honored those who procreated my body. And, with respect to other men, I have never slain any one, nor defrauded any one of what he deposited with me, nor have I committed any other atrocious deed. If, therefore, during my life I have acted erroneously, by eating or drinking things which it is unlawful to eat or drink, I have not erred through myself, but through these" (pointing to the chest which contained the viscera). The removal of the organs identified as the seat of the appetites was considered equivalent to the purification of the body from their evil influences.

So literally did the early Christians interpret their Scriptures that they preserved the bodies of their dead by pickling them in salt water, so that on the day of resurrection the spirit of the dead might reenter a complete and perfectly preserved body. Believing that the incisions necessary to the embalming process and the removal of the internal organs would prevent the return of the spirit to its body, the Christians buried their dead without resorting to the more elaborate mummification methods employed by the Egyptian morticians.

In his work on *Egyptian Magic,* S.S.D.D. hazards the following speculation concerning the esoteric purposes behind the practice of mummification. “There is every reason to suppose,” he says, “that only those who had received some grade of initiation were mummified; for it is certain that, in the eyes of the Egyptians, mummification effectually prevented reincarnation. Reincarnation was necessary to imperfect souls, to those who had failed to pass the tests of initiation; but for those who had the Will and the capacity to enter the Secret Adytum, there was seldom necessity for that liberation of the soul which is said to be effected by the destruction of the body. The body of the Initiate was therefore preserved after death as a species of Talisman or material basis for the manifestation of the Soul upon earth.”

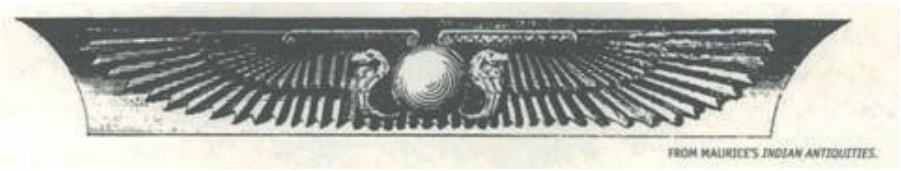
During the period of its inception mummification was limited to the Pharaoh and such other persons of royal rank as presumably partook of the attributes of the great Osiris, the divine, mummified King of the Egyptian Underworld.

IX

The Sun, a Universal Deity

The adoration of the sun was one of the earliest and most natural forms of religious expression. Complex modern theologies are merely involvements and amplifications of this simple aboriginal belief. The primitive mind, recognizing the beneficent power of the solar orb, adored it as the proxy of the Supreme Deity. Concerning the origin of sun worship, Albert Pike makes the following concise statement in his *Morals and Dogma:* "To them [aboriginal peoples] he [the sun] was the innate fire of bodies, the fire of Nature. Author of Life, heat, and ignition, he was to them the efficient cause of all generation, for without him there was no movement, no existence, no form. He was to them immense, indivisible, imperishable, and everywhere present. It was their need of light, and of his creative energy, that was felt by all men; and nothing was more fearful to them than his absence. His beneficent influences caused his identification with the Principle of Good; and the BRAHMA of the Hindus, and MITHRAS of the Persians, and ATHOM, AMUN, PHTHA, and OSIRIS, of the Egyptians, the BEL of the Chaldeans, the ADONAI of the Phoenicians, the ADONIS and APOLLO of the Greeks, became but personifications of the Sun, the regenerating Principle, image of that fecundity which perpetuates and rejuvenates the world's existence."

Among all the nations of antiquity, altars, mounds, and temples were dedicated to the worship of the orb of day. The ruins of these sacred places yet remain, notable among them being the pyramids of Yucatan and Egypt, the snake mounds of the American Indians, the Zikkurats of Babylon and Chaldea, the round towers of Ireland, and the massive rings of uncut stone in Britain and Normandy. The Tower of Babel, which, according to the Scriptures, was built so that man might reach up to God, was probably an astronomical observatory.



THE WINGED GLOBE OF EGYPT.

This symbol, which appears over the pylons or gates of many Egyptian palaces and temples, is emblematic of the three persons of the Egyptian Trinity. The wings, the serpents, and the solar orb are the insignia of Ammon, Ra, and Osiris.

Many early priests and prophets, both pagan and Christian, were versed in astronomy and astrology; their writings are best understood when read in the light of these ancient sciences. With the growth of man’s knowledge of the constitution and periodicity of the heavenly bodies, astronomical principles and terminology were introduced into his religious systems. The tutelary gods were given planetary thrones, the celestial bodies being named after the deities assigned to them. The fixed stars were divided into constellations, and through these constellations wandered the sun and its planets, the latter with their accompanying satellites.

The Solar Trinity

The sun, as supreme among the celestial bodies visible to the astronomers of antiquity, was assigned to the highest of the gods and became symbolic of the supreme authority of the Creator Himself. From a deep philosophic consideration of the powers and principles of the sun has come the concept of the Trinity as it is understood in the world today. The tenet of a Triune Divinity is not peculiar to Christian or Mosaic theology, but forms a conspicuous part of the dogma of the greatest religions of both ancient and modern times. The Persians, Hindus, Babylonians, and Egyptians had their Trinities. In every instance these represented the threefold form of one Supreme Intelligence. In modern Masonry, the Deity is symbolized by an equilateral triangle, its three sides representing the primary manifestations of the Eternal One who is Himself represented as a tiny flame, called by the Hebrews *Yod* (′). Jakob Böhme, the Teutonic mystic, calls the Trinity *The Three Witnesses,* by means of which the Invisible is made known to the visible, tangible universe.

The origin of the Trinity is obvious to anyone who will observe the daily manifestations of the sun. This orb, being the symbol of all Light, has three distinct phases: rising, midday, and setting. The philosophers therefore divided the life of all things into three distinct parts: growth, maturity, and decay. Between the twilight of dawn and the twilight of evening is the high noon of resplendent glory. God the Father, the Creator of the world, is symbolized by the dawn. His color is blue, because the sun rising in the morning is veiled in blue mist. God the Son, the Illuminating One sent to bear witness of His Father before all worlds, is the celestial globe at noonday, radiant and magnificent, the maned Lion of Judah, the Golden-haired Savior of the World. Yellow is His color and His power is without end. God the Holy Ghost is the sunset phase, when the orb of day, robed in flaming red, rests for a moment upon the horizon line and then vanishes into the darkness of the night to wander in the lower worlds and later rise again triumphant from the embrace of darkness.

To the Egyptians the sun was the symbol of immortality, for, while it died each night, it rose again with each ensuing dawn. Not only has the sun this

diurnal activity, but it also has its annual pilgrimage, during which time it passes successively through the twelve celestial houses of the heavens, remaining in each for thirty days. Added to these it has a third path of travel, which is called the *precession of the equinoxes,* in which it retrogrades around the zodiac through the twelve signs at the rate of one degree every seventy-two years.

Concerning the annual passage of the sun through the twelve houses of the heavens, Robert Hewitt Brown, 32°, makes the following statement: “The Sun, as he pursued his way among these ‘living creatures’ of the zodiac, was said, in allegorical language, either to assume the nature of or to triumph over the sign he entered. The sun thus became a Bull in Taurus, and was worshipped as such by the Egyptians under the name of Apis, and by the Assyrians as Bel, Baal, or Bul. In Leo the sun became a Lion-slayer, Hercules, and an Archer in Sagittarius. In Pisces, the Fishes, he was a fish—Dagon, or Vishnu, the fish-god of the Philistines and Hindoos.”

A careful analysis of the religious systems of pagandom uncovers much evidence of the fact that its priests served the solar energy and that their Supreme Deity was in every case this Divine Light personified. Godfrey Higgins, after thirty years of inquiry into the origin of religious beliefs, is of the opinion that “All the Gods of antiquity resolved themselves into the solar fire, sometimes itself as God, or sometimes an emblem or shekinah of that higher principle, known by the name of the creative Being or God.”

The Egyptian priests in many of their ceremonies wore the skins of lions, which were symbols of the solar orb, owing to the fact that the sun is exalted, dignified, and most fortunately placed in the constellation of Leo, which he rules and which was at one time the keystone of the celestial arch. Again, Hercules is the Solar Deity, for as this mighty hunter performed his twelve labors, so the sun, in traversing the twelve houses of the zodiacal band, performs during his pilgrimage twelve essential and benevolent labors for the human race and for Nature in general. Hercules, like the Egyptian priests, wore the skin of a lion for a girdle. Samson, the Hebrew hero, as his name implies, is also a solar deity. His fight with the Nubian lion, his battles with the Philistines, who represent the Powers of Darkness, and his memorable feat of carrying off the gates of Gaza, all refer to aspects of solar activity. Many of the ancient peoples had more than one solar deity; in fact, all of the gods and goddesses were supposed to partake, in part at least, of the sun’s effulgence.

The golden ornaments used by the priestcraft of the various world religions are again a subtle reference to the solar energy, as are also the crowns of kings.

In ancient times, crowns had a number of points extending outward like the rays of the sun, but modern conventionalism has, in many cases, either removed the points or else bent them inward, gathered them together, and placed an orb or cross upon the point where they meet. Many of the ancient prophets, philosophers, and dignitaries carried a scepter, the upper end of which bore a representation of the solar globe surrounded by emanating rays. All the kingdoms of earth were but copies of the kingdoms of Heaven, and the kingdoms of Heaven were best symbolized by the solar kingdom, in which the sun was the supreme ruler, the planets his privy council, and all Nature the subjects of his empire.

Many deities have been associated with the sun. The Greeks believed that Apollo, Bacchus, Dionysos, Sabazius, Hercules, Jason, Ulysses, Zeus, Uranus, and Vulcan partook of either the visible or invisible attributes of the sun. The Norwegians regarded Balder the Beautiful as a solar deity, and Odin is often connected with the celestial orb, especially because of his one eye. Among the Egyptians, Osiris, Ra, Anubis, Hermes, and even the mysterious Ammon himself had points of resemblance with the solar disc. Isis was the mother of the sun, and even Typhon, the Destroyer, was supposed to be a form of solar energy. The Egyptian sun myth finally centered around the person of a mysterious deity called *Serapis.* The two Central American deities, *Tezcatlipoca* and *Quetzalcoatl*, while often associated with the winds, were also undoubtedly solar gods.

In Masonry the sun has many symbols. One expression of the solar energy is Solomon, whose name SOL-OM-ON is the name for the Supreme Light in three different languages. Hiram Abiff, the CHiram (Hiram) of the Chaldees, is also a solar deity, and the story of his attack and murder by the Ruffians, with its solar interpretation, will be found in the chapter *The Hiramic Legend.* A striking example of the important part which the sun plays in the symbols and rituals of Freemasonry is given by George Oliver, D.D., in his *Dictionary of Symbolical Masonry,* as follows:

“The sun rises in the east, and in the east is the place for the Worshipful Master. As the sun is the source of all light and warmth, so should the Worshipful Master enliven and warm the brethren to their work. Among the ancient Egyptians the sun was the symbol of divine providence.” The hierophants of the Mysteries were adorned with many insignia emblematic of solar power. The sunbursts of gilt embroidery on the back of the vestments of the Catholic priesthood signify that the priest is also an emissary and representative of *Sol Invictus.*

Christianity and the Sun

For reasons which they doubtless considered sufficient, those who chronicled the life and acts of Jesus found it advisable to metamorphose him into a solar deity. The historical Jesus was forgotten; nearly all the salient incidents recorded in the four Gospels have their correlations in the movements, phases, or functions of the heavenly bodies.

Among other allegories borrowed by Christianity from pagan antiquity is the story of the beautiful, blue-eyed Sun God, with His golden hair falling upon His shoulders, robed from head to foot in spotless white and carrying in His arms the Lamb of God, symbolic of the vernal equinox. This handsome youth is a composite of Apollo, Osiris, Orpheus, Mithras, and Bacchus, for He has certain characteristics in common with each of these pagan deities.

The philosophers of Greece and Egypt divided the life of the sun during the year into four parts; therefore they symbolized the Solar Man by four different figures. When He was born in the winter solstice, the Sun God was symbolized as a dependent infant who in some mysterious manner had managed to escape the Powers of Darkness seeking to destroy Him while He was still in the cradle of winter. The sun, being weak at this season of the year, had no golden rays (or locks of hair), but the survival of the light through the darkness of winter was symbolized by one tiny hair which alone adorned the head of the Celestial Child. (As the birth of the sun took place in Capricorn, it was often represented as being suckled by a goat.)

At the vernal equinox, the sun had grown to be a beautiful youth. His golden hair hung in ringlets on his shoulders and his light, as Schiller said, extended to all parts of infinity. At the summer solstice, the sun became a strong man, heavily bearded, who, in the prime of maturity, symbolized the fact that Nature at this period of the year is strongest and most fecund. At the autumnal equinox, the sun was pictured as an aged man, shuffling along with bended back and whitened locks into the oblivion of winter darkness. Thus, twelve months were assigned to the sun as the length of its life. During this period it circled the

twelve signs of the zodiac in a magnificent triumphal march. When fall came, it entered, like Samson, into the house of Delilah (Virgo), where its rays were cut off and it lost its strength. In Masonry, the cruel winter months are symbolized by three murderers who sought to destroy the God of Light and Truth.

The coming of the sun was hailed with joy; the time of its departure was viewed as a period to be set aside for sorrow and unhappiness. This glorious, radiant orb of day, the true light “which lighteth every man who cometh into the world,” the supreme benefactor, who raised all things from the dead, who fed the hungry multitudes, who stilled the tempest, who after dying rose again and restored all things to life—this Supreme Spirit of humanitarianism and philanthropy is known to Christendom as Christ, the Redeemer of worlds, the Only Begotten of The Father, the Word made Flesh, and the Hope of Glory.

The Birthday of the Sun

The pagans set aside the 25th of December as the birthday of the Solar Man. They rejoiced, feasted, gathered in processions, and made offerings in the temples. The darkness of winter was over and the glorious son of light was returning to the Northern Hemisphere. With his last effort the old Sun God had torn down the house of the Philistines (the Spirits of Darkness) and had cleared the way for the new sun who was born that day from the depths of the earth amidst the symbolic beasts of the lower world.

Concerning this season of celebration, an anonymous Master of Arts of Balliol College, Oxford, in his scholarly treatise, *Mankind—Their Origin and Destiny,* says: "The Romans also had their solar festival, and their games of the circus in honor of the birth of the god of day. It took place the eighth day before the kalends of January—that is, on December 25. Servius, in his commentary on verse 720 of the seventh book of the Æneid, in which Virgil speaks of the new sun, says that, properly speaking, the sun is new on the 8th of the Kalends of January—that is, December 25. In the time of Leo I. (Leo, Serm. xxi., De Nativ. Dom. p. 148), some of the Fathers of the Church said that 'what rendered the festival (of Christmas) venerable was less the birth of Jesus Christ than the return, and, as they expressed it, the new birth of the sun.' It was on the same day that the birth of the Invincible Sun (Natalis solis invicti), was celebrated at Rome, as can be seen in the Roman calendars, published in the reign of Constantine and of Julian (Hymn to the Sun, p. 155). This epithet 'Invictus' is the same as the Persians gave to this same god, whom they worshipped by the name of Mithra, and whom they caused to be born in a grotto (Justin. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 305), just as he is represented as being born in a stable, under the name of Christ, by the Christians."

Concerning the Catholic Feast of the Assumption and its parallel in astronomy, the same author adds: "At the end of eight months, when the sun-god, having increased, traverses the eighth sign, he absorbs the celestial Virgin in his fiery course, and she disappears in the midst of the luminous rays and the glory of her son. This phenomenon, which takes place every year about the

middle of August, gave rise to a festival which still exists, and in which it is supposed that the mother of Christ, laying aside her earthly life, is associated with the glory of her son, and is placed at his side in the heavens. The Roman calendar of Columella (Col. 1. II. cap. ii. p. 429) marks the death or disappearance of Virgo at this period. The sun, he says, passes into Virgo on the thirteenth day before the kalends of September. This is where the Catholics place the Feast of the Assumption, or the reunion of the Virgin to her Son. This feast was formerly called the feast of the Passage of the Virgin (Beausobre, tome i. p. 350); and in the Library of the Fathers (Bibl. Patr. vol. II. part ii. p. 212) we have an account of the Passage of the Blessed Virgin. The ancient Greeks and Romans fix the assumption of Astraea, who is also this same Virgin, on that day."

This Virgin mother, giving birth to the Sun God which Christianity has so faithfully preserved, is a reminder of the inscription concerning her Egyptian prototype, Isis, which appeared on the Temple of Sais: "*The fruit which l have brought forth is the Sun."* While the Virgin was associated with the moon by the early pagans, there is no doubt that they also understood her position as a constellation in the heavens, for nearly all the peoples of antiquity credit her as being the mother of the sun, and they realized that although the moon could not occupy that position, the sign of Virgo could, and did, give birth to the sun out of her side on the 25th day of December. Albertus Magnus states, "We know that the sign of the Celestial Virgin rose over the Horizon at the moment at which we fix the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Among certain of the Arabian and Persian astronomers the three stars forming the sword belt of Orion were called the Magi who came to pay homage to the young Sun God. The author of *Mankind—Their Origin and Destiny* contributes the following additional information: "In Cancer, which had risen to the meridian at midnight, is the constellation of the Stable and of the Ass. The ancients called it Præsepe Jovis. In the north the stars of the Bear are seen, called by the Arabians Martha and Mary, and also the coffin of Lazarus." Thus the esotericism of pagandom was embodied in Christianity, although its keys are lost. The Christian church blindly follows ancient customs, and when asked for a reason gives superficial and unsatisfactory explanations, either forgetting or ignoring the indisputable fact that each religion is based upon the secret doctrines of its predecessor.

SURYA, THE REGENT OF THE SUN.

Moor describes this figure as follows: “The cast is nine inches in height, representing the glorious god of day holding the attributes of VISHNU, seated on a seven-headed serpent; his car drawn by a seven-headed horse, driven by the legless ARUN, a personification of the dawn, or AURORA.” (See Moor’s *Hindu Pantheon*.)

The Three Suns

The solar orb, like the nature of man, was divided by the ancient sages into three separate bodies. According to the mystics, there are three suns in each solar system, analogous to the three centers of life in each individual constitution. These are called three lights: the *spiritual* sun, the *intellectual* or *soular* sun, and the *material* sun (now symbolized in Freemasonry by three candles). The spiritual sun manifests the power of God the Father; the soular sun radiates the life of God the Son; and the material sun is the vehicle of manifestation for God the Holy Spirit. Man's nature was divided by the mystics into three distinct parts: spirit, soul, and body. His physical body was unfolded and vitalized by the material sun; his spiritual nature was illuminated by the spiritual sun; and his intellectual nature was redeemed by the true *light of grace*—the soular sun. The alignment of these three globes in the heavens was one explanation offered for the peculiar fact that the orbits of the planets are not circular but elliptical.

The pagan priests always considered the solar system as a *Grand Man,* and drew their analogy of these three centers of activity from the three main centers of life in the human body: the brain, the heart, and the generative system. The Transfiguration of Jesus describes three tabernacles, the largest being in the center (the heart), and a smaller one on either side (the brain and the generative system). It is possible that the philosophical hypothesis of the existence of the three suns is based upon a peculiar natural phenomenon which has occurred many times in history. In the fifty-first year after Christ three suns were seen at once in the sky and also in the sixty-sixth year. In the sixty-ninth year, two suns were seen together. According to William Lilly, between the years 1156 and 1648 twenty similar occurrences were recorded.

Recognizing the sun as the supreme benefactor of the material world, Hermetists believed that there was a spiritual sun which ministered to the needs of the invisible and divine part of Nature—human and universal. Anent this subject, the great Paracelsus wrote: "There is an earthly sun, which is the cause of all heat, and all who are able to see may see the sun; and those who are blind and cannot see him may feel his heat. There is an Eternal Sun, which is the

source of all wisdom, and those whose spiritual senses have awakened to life will see that sun and be conscious of His existence; but those who have not attained spiritual consciousness may yet feel His power by an inner faculty which is called Intuition."

Certain Rosicrucian scholars have given special appellations to these three phases of the sun: the spiritual sun they called *Vulcan;* the soular and intellectual sun, *Christ* and *Lucifer* respectively; and the material sun, the Jewish Demiurgus *Jehovah.* Lucifer here represents the intellectual mind without the illumination of the spiritual mind; therefore it is "the false light." The false light is finally overcome and redeemed by the true light of the soul, called the *Second Logos* or *Christ.* The secret processes by which the Luciferian intellect is transmuted into the Christly intellect constitute one of the great secrets of alchemy, and are symbolized by the process of transmuting base metals into gold.

In the rare treatise, *The Secret Symbols of The Rosicrucians,* Franz Hartmann defines the sun alchemically as: "The symbol of Wisdom. The Centre of Power or Heart of things. The Sun is a centre of energy and a storehouse of power. Each living being contains within itself a centre of life, which may grow to be a Sun. In the heart of the regenerated, the divine power, stimulated by the Light of the Logos, grows into a Sun which illuminates his mind." In a note, the same author amplifies his description by adding: "The terrestrial sun is the image or reflection of the invisible celestial sun; the former is in the realm of Spirit what the latter is in the realm of Matter; but the latter receives its power from the former."

In the majority of cases, the religions of antiquity agree that the material visible sun was a reflector rather than a source of power. The sun was sometimes represented as a shield carried on the arm of the Sun God, as for example, Frey, the Scandinavian Solar Deity. This sun reflected the light of the invisible *spiritual* sun, which was the true source of life, light, and truth. The physical nature of the universe is receptive; it is a realm of effects. The invisible causes of these effects belong to the spiritual world. Hence, the spiritual world is the sphere of *causation;* the material world is the sphere of *effects;* while the intellectual—or soul—world is the sphere of *mediation.* Thus Christ, the personified higher intellect and soul nature, is called "the Mediator" who, by virtue of His position and power, says: "No man cometh to the Father, but by me."

What the sun is to the solar system, the spirit is to the bodies of man; for his natures, organs, and functions are as planets surrounding the central life (or sun)

and living upon its emanations. The solar power in man is divided into three parts, which are termed the threefold human spirit of man. All three of these spiritual natures are said to be radiant and transcendent; united, they form the Divinity in man. Man's threefold lower nature—consisting of his physical organism, his emotional nature, and his mental faculties—reflects the light of his threefold Divinity and bears witness of It in the physical world. Man's three bodies are symbolized by an upright triangle; his threefold spiritual nature by an inverted triangle. These two triangles, when united in the form of a six-pointed star, were called by the Jews "the Star of David," "the Signet of Solomon," and are more commonly known today as "the Star of Zion." These triangles symbolize the spiritual and material universes linked together in the constitution of the human creature, who partakes of both Nature and Divinity. Man's animal nature partakes of the earth; his divine nature of the heavens; his human nature of the mediator.

The Celestial Inhabitants of the Sun

The Rosicrucians and the Illuminati, describing the angels, archangels, and other celestial creatures, declared that they resembled small suns, being centers of radiant energy surrounded by streamers of Vrilic force. From these outpouring streamers of force is derived the popular belief that angels have wings. These wings are corona-like fans of light, by means of which the celestial creatures propel themselves through the subtle essences of the superphysical worlds.

True mystics are unanimous in their denial of the theory that the angels and archangels are human in form, as so often pictured. A human figure would be utterly useless in the ethereal substances through which they manifest. Science has long debated the probability of the other planets being inhabited. Objections to the idea are based upon the argument that creatures with human organisms could not possibly exist in the environments of Mars, Jupiter, Uranus, and Neptune. This argument fails to take into account Nature's universal law of adjustment to environment. The ancients asserted that life originated from the sun, and that everything when bathed in the light of the solar orb was capable of absorbing the solar life elements and later radiating them as flora and fauna. One philosophical concept regarded the sun as a parent and the planets as embryos still connected to the solar body by means of ethereal umbilical cords which served as channels to convey life and nourishment to the planets.

Some secret orders have taught that the sun was inhabited by a race of creatures with bodies composed of a radiant, spiritual ether not unlike in its constituency the actual glowing ball of the sun itself. The solar heat had no harmful effect upon them, because their organisms were sufficiently refined and sensitized to harmonize with the sun's tremendous vibratory rate. These creatures resemble miniature suns, being a little larger than a dinner plate in size, although some of the more powerful are considerably larger. Their color is the golden white light of the sun, and from them emanate four streamers of Vril. These streamers are often of great length and are in constant motion. A peculiar palpitation is to be noted throughout the structure of the globe and is communicated in the form of ripples to the emanating streamers. The greatest

and most luminous of these spheres is the Archangel Michael; and the entire order of solar life, which resemble him and dwell upon the sun, are called by modern Christians “the archangels” or “the spirits of the light.”

The Sun in Alchemical Symbology

Gold is the metal of the sun and has been considered by many as crystallized sunlight. When gold is mentioned in alchemical tracts, it may be either the metal itself or the celestial orb which is the source, or spirit, of gold. Sulphur because of in fiery nature was also associated with the sun.

As gold was the symbol of spirit and the base metals represented man's lower nature, certain alchemists were called "miners" and were pictured with picks and shovels digging into the earth in search of the precious metal—those finer traits of character buried in the earthiness of materiality and ignorance. The diamond concealed in the heart of the black carbon illustrated the same principle. The Illuminati used a pearl hidden in the shell of an oyster at the bottom of the sea to signify spiritual powers. Thus the seeker after truth became a pearl-fisher: he descended into the sea of material illusion in search of understanding, termed by the initiates "the Pearl of Great Price."

When the alchemists stated that every animate and inanimate thing in the universe contained the seeds of gold, they meant that even the grains of sand possessed a spiritual nature, for gold was the spirit of all things. Concerning these seeds of spiritual gold the following Rosicrucian axiom is significant: "A seed is useless and impotent unless it is put in its appropriate matrix." Franz Hartmann comments on this axiom with these illuminating words: "A soul cannot develop and progress without an appropriate body, because it is the physical body that furnishes the material for its development." (See *In the Pronaos of the Temple of Wisdom.)*

The purpose of alchemy was not to make something out of nothing but rather to fertilize and nurture the seed which was already present. Its processes did not actually create gold but rather made the ever-present seed of gold grow and flourish. Everything which exists has a spirit—the seed of Divinity within itself —and regeneration is not the process of attempting to place something where it previously had not existed. Regeneration actually means the unfoldment of the omnipresent Divinity in man, that this Divinity may shine forth as a sun and

illumine all with whom it comes in contact.

The Midnight Sun

Apuleius said when describing his initiation *(vide ante):* "At midnight I saw the sun shining with a splendid light." The midnight sun was also part of the mystery of alchemy. It symbolized the spirit in man shining through the darkness of his human organisms. It also referred to the *spiritual* sun in the solar system, which the mystic could see as well at midnight as at high noon, the material earth being powerless to obstruct the rays of this Divine orb. The mysterious lights which illuminated the temples of the Egyptian Mysteries during the nocturnal hours were said by some to be reflections of the *spiritual* sun gathered by the magical powers of the priests. The weird light seen ten miles below the surface of the earth by I-AM-THE-MAN in that remarkable Masonic allegory *Etidorhpa* (Aphrodite spelt backward) may well refer to the mysterious midnight sun of the ancient rites.

Primitive conceptions concerning the warfare between the principles of Good and Evil were often based upon the alternations of day and night. During the Middle Ages, the practices of black magic were confined to the nocturnal hours; and those who served the Spirit of Evil were called black magicians, while those who served the Spirit of Good were called white magicians. Black and white were associated respectively with night and day, and the endless conflict of light and shadow is alluded to many times in the mythologies of various peoples.

The Egyptian Demon, Typhon, was symbolized as part crocodile and part hog because these animals are gross and earthy in both appearance and temperament. Since the world began, living things have feared the darkness; those few creatures who use it as a shield for their maneuvers were usually connected with the Spirit of Evil. Consequently cats, bats, toads, and owls are associated with witchcraft. In certain parts of Europe it is still believed that at night black magicians assume the bodies of wolves and roam around destroying. From this notion originated the stories of the werewolves. Serpents, because they lived in the earth, were associated with the Spirit of Darkness. As the battle between Good and Evil centers around the use of the generative forces of Nature, winged serpents represent the regeneration of the animal nature of man or those Great

Ones in whom this regeneration is complete. Among the Egyptians the sun's rays are often shown ending in human hands. Masons will find a connection between these hands and the well-known *Paw of the Lion* which raises all things to life with its grip.

Solar Colors

The theory so long held of three primary and four secondary colors is purely exoteric, for since the earliest periods it has been known that there are seven, and not three, primary colors, the human eye being capable of estimating only three of them. Thus, although green can be made by combining blue and yellow, there is also a true or primary green which is not a compound. This can be proved by breaking up the spectrum with a prism. Helmholtz found that the so-called secondary colors of the spectrum could not be broken up into their supposed primary colors. Thus the orange of the spectrum, if passed through a second prism, does not break up into red and yellow but remains orange.

Consciousness, intelligence, and force are fittingly symbolized by the colors blue, yellow, and red. The therapeutic effects of the colors, moreover, are in harmony with this concept, for blue is a fine, soothing, electrical color; yellow, a vitalizing and refining color; and red, an agitating and heat-giving color. It has also been demonstrated that minerals and plants affect the human constitution according to their colors. Thus a yellow flower generally yields a medicine that affects the constitution in a manner similar to yellow light or the musical tone mi. An orange flower will influence in a manner similar to orange light and, being one of the so-called secondary colors, corresponds either to the tone re or to the chord of *do* and *mi.*

The ancients conceived the spirit of man to correspond with the color blue, the mind with yellow, and the body with red. Heaven is therefore blue, earth yellow, and hell—or the underworld—red. The fiery condition of the inferno merely symbolizes the nature of the sphere or plane of force of which it is composed. In the Greek Mysteries the irrational sphere was always considered as red, for it represented that condition in which the consciousness is enslaved by the lusts and passions of the lower nature. In India certain of the gods—usually attributes of Vishnu—are depicted with blue skin to signify their divine and supermundane constitution. According to esoteric philosophy, blue is the true and sacred color of the sun. The apparent orange-yellow shade of this orb is the result of its rays being immersed in the substances of the illusionary world.

In the original symbolism of the Christian Church, colors were of first importance and their use was regulated according to carefully prepared rules. Since the Middle Ages, however, the carelessness with which colors have been employed has resulted in the loss of their deeper emblematic meanings. In its primary aspect, white or silver signified life, purity, innocence, joy, and light; red, the suffering and death of Christ and His saints, and also divine love, blood, and warfare or suffering; blue, the heavenly sphere and the states of godliness and contemplation; yellow or gold, glory, fruitfulness, and goodness; green, fecundity, youthfulness, and prosperity; violet, humility, deep affection, and sorrow ; black, death, destruction, and humiliation. In early church art the colors of robes and ornaments also revealed whether a saint had been martyred, as well as the character of the work that he had done to deserve canonization.

In addition to the colors of the spectrum there are a vast number of vibratory color waves, some too low and others too high to be registered by the human optical apparatus. It is appalling to contemplate man’s colossal ignorance concerning these vistas of abstract space. As in the past man explored unknown continents, so in the future, armed with curious implements fashioned for the purpose, he will explore these little known fastnesses of light, color, sound, and consciousness.

X

The Zodiac-and Its Signs

It is difficult for this age to estimate correctly the profound effect produced upon the religions, philosophies, and sciences of antiquity by the study of the planets, luminaries, and constellations. Not without adequate reason were the Magi of Persia called the Star Gazers. The Egyptians were honored with a special appellation because of their proficiency in computing the power and motion of the heavenly bodies and their effect upon the destinies of nations and individuals.

Ruins of primitive astronomical observatories have been discovered in all parts of the world, although in many cases modern archæologists are unaware of the true purpose for which these structures were erected. While the telescope was unknown to ancient astronomers, they made many remarkable calculations with instruments cut from blocks of granite or pounded from sheets of brass and copper. In India such instruments are still in use, and they possess a high degree of accuracy. In Jaipur, Rajputana, India, an observatory consisting largely of immense stone sundials is still in operation. The famous Chinese observatory on the wall of Peking consists of immense bronze instruments, including a telescope in the form of a hollow tube without lenses.

The pagans looked upon the stars as living things, capable of influencing the destinies of individuals, nations, and races. That the early Jewish patriarchs believed that the celestial bodies participated in the affairs of men is evident to any student of Biblical literature, as, for example, in the Book of Judges: “They fought from heaven, even the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.” The Chaldeans, Phœnicians, Egyptians, Persians, Hindus, and Chinese all had zodiacs that were much alike in general character, and different authorities have credited each of these nations with being the cradle of astrology and astronomy The Central and North American Indians also had an understanding of the zodiac, but the patterns and numbers of the signs differed in many details from

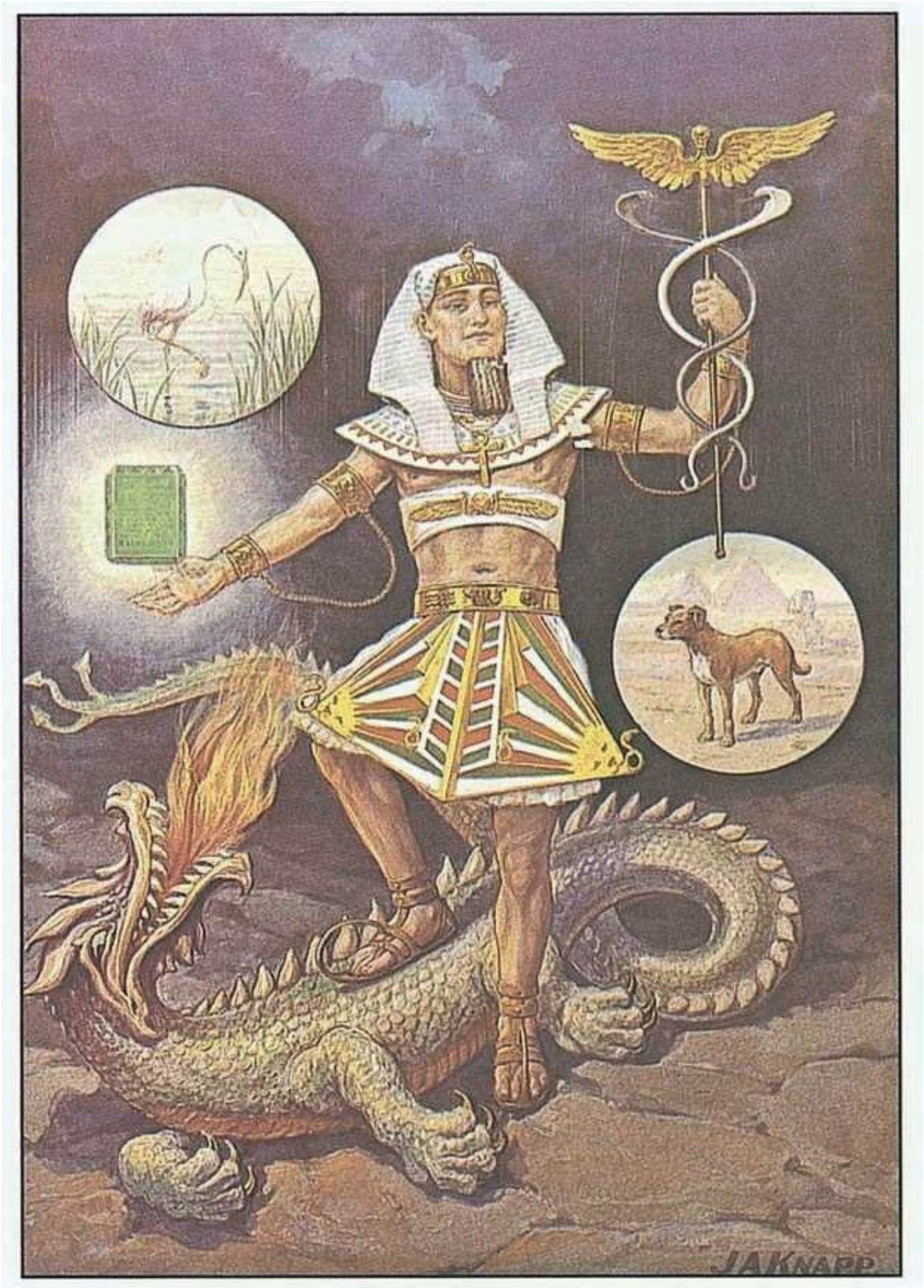
those of the Eastern Hemisphere.

REDRAWN FROM LENOIR'S *LA FRANCHE-MACONNERIE.*

GROUP OF WORLD RELIGIONS.

At the left of the plate stands Mohammed, holding aloft pages from the Koran, his left foot upon an image which he has overthrown. Behind Mohammed the Celestial Butt—signifying the constellation of Taurus—opens the "Egg of the Year" with his horns. At the lower right is a bas-relief of the Persian Sun God, Mithras, in an attitude signifying the conquest of the sun over the Celestial Bull at the ancient vernal equinox. In the center stands the High Priest of Israel, his right arm encircling the base of the seven-branched candlestick—the Mosaic

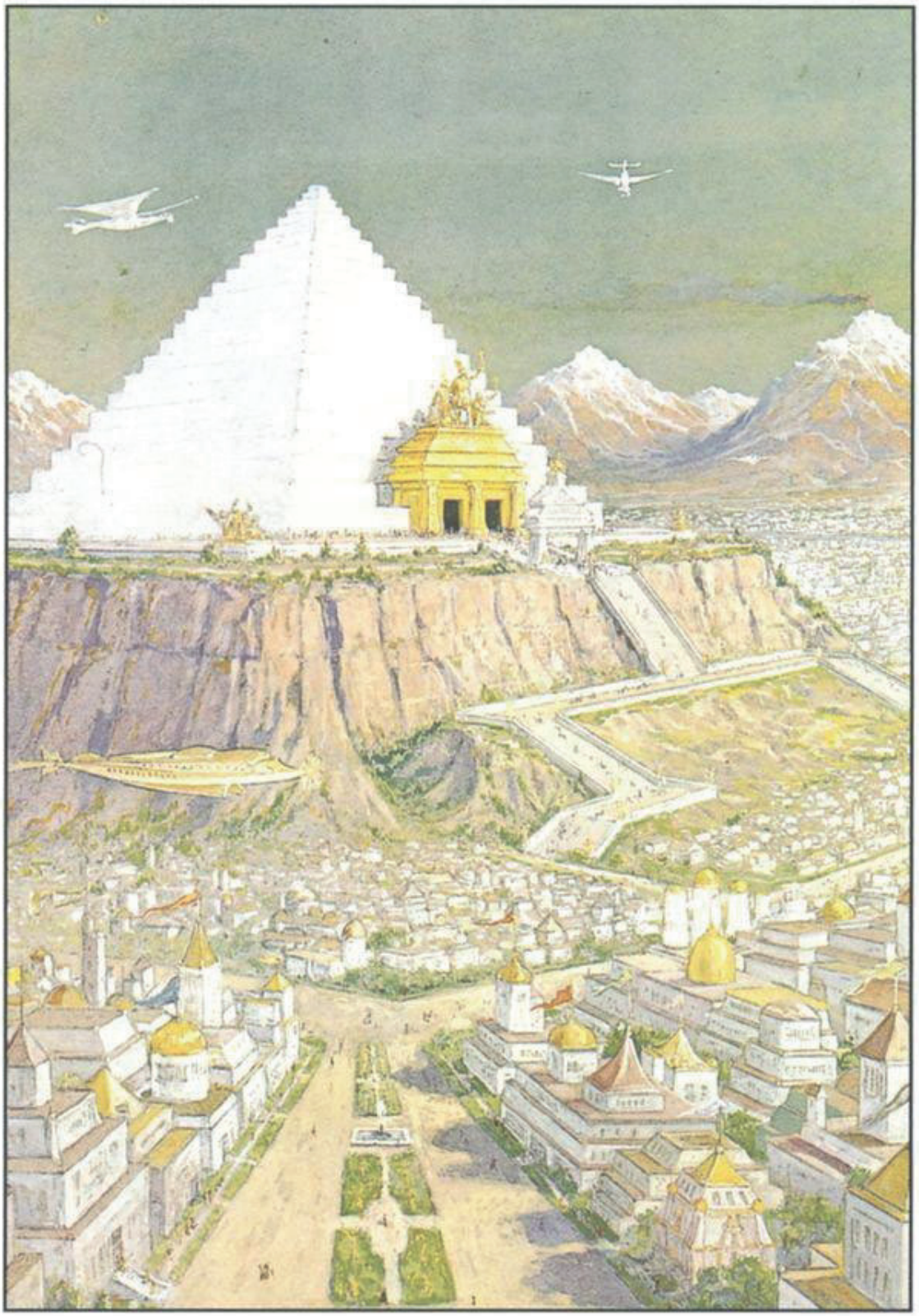
symbol of the Planetary Governors of the world. To his right is the statue of the golden calf and to his left the robed figures of the Greek mystics bearing a tripod in which burns the sacrificial fire. Behind the bull Apis, crowned with the lunar globe, and Father Nile, bearing the horn of plenty and pouring the waters of life from his urn, loom the Pyramids—the great Egyptian temples of initiation. In the clouds at the left is the seated figure of Jupiter Ammon, brandishing a flaming thunderbolt and horned to signify that he partakes of the attributes of the zodiacal ram. In the heavens appears the mystery of the Apocalypse. The four creatures of Ezekiel's Vision surround an altar upon which is the Book of Seven Seals and the Lamb of God. At the upper left is the band of the zodiac. The constellations of Taurus, Aries, and Pisces represent the stellar influences which —according to the ancients—descending upon the earth, are responsible for the establishment of the religious and philosophical institutions herein set forth.


JAKNAPP

HERMES STANDING UPON THE BACK OF TYPHON.

Hermes, as the personification of Universal Wisdom, is here depicted with his foot upon the back of Typhon, the vanquished dragon of ignorance and perversion. To the Egyptian initiates Typhon, the devourer of souls, signified the lower world which swallows up the spiritual nature of the individual who, being imperfect, is forced to descend from the higher spheres and be reborn into the physical universe. To be swallowed by Typhon therefore signifies the process of rebirth, from which man can only release himself by vanquishing his mortal Adversary.

In one hand Hermes carries the Caduceus, a winged rod with two fighting serpents entwined about it; in the other, the immortal Emerald, upon whose surface was inscribed in raised letters the sum of philosophy. The figure wears the ancient Egyptian Masonic apron according to the pattern discovered by Belzoni, the eminent Egyptologist. The two small circles contain the forms and symbols most closely associated with Hermes. In the upper circle is the ibis, whose curious characteristics have caused it to be particularly associated with the medical art. In the initiation ceremonies the Egyptian priests wore masks in the form of the ibis head to signify that they represented the attributes of Thoth, or Hermes. The lower circle contains the dog, an animal always associated with Hermes because of its intelligence and devotion. Upon the forehead of Hermes appears the uræus, the secret symbol of the constellation of Scorpio, which represents the regeneration of the same power that in the form of a dragon lies helpless under his foot. The scarab over the heart of Hermes represents the presence of the spiritual and regenerative light within his own soul; the collar typifies by its circles the orbits of the heavenly bodies. The three points of the tail of Typhon which end in arrows indicate the three destructive expressions of universal energy—mental, moral, and physical perversion. The entire diagram signifies mastery through the regeneration of the body, the illumination of the mind, and the transmutation of the emotions.

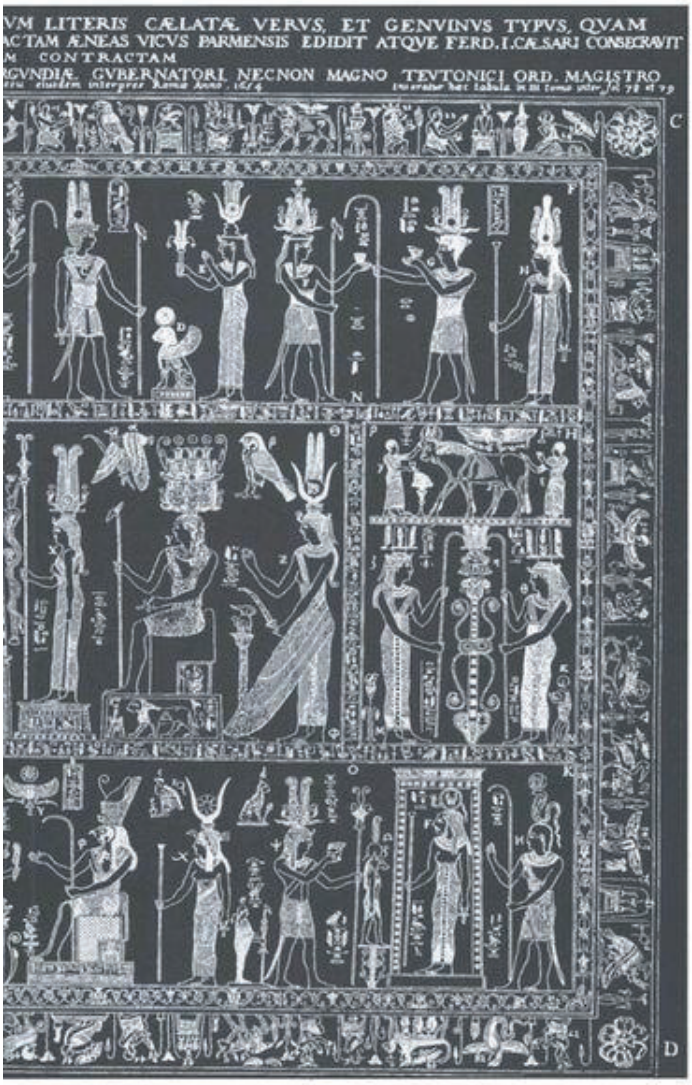


AN IDEALISTIC DEPICTION OF THE ATLANTEAN MYSTERY TEMPLE.

In the Critias, Plato describes in detait the divine foundation of the Attantean Empire, originally known as Poseidonis. The golden age preserved in myth and legend, when the gods walked with men, depicts the zenith of Atlantean civilization. The demigods of the ancient world were the Atlanteans, to whom every civilized nation owes an incalculable debt of gratitude. In the British Museum there is a remarkable document—known as the Troano manuscript—which was written over 3,500 years ago by the Mayas of Yucatan, containing an authentic account of the cataclysm which sank the continent of Atlantis. This priceless document contains the following statement according to the translation by Le Plongeon: “In the year 6 Kan, on the 11th Mulac in the month Zac, there occurred terrible earthquakes, which continued without interruption until the 13th Chuen. The country of the hills of Mud, the land of Mu, was sacrificed; being twice upheaved it suddenly disappeared during one night, the basin being continually shaken by volcanic forces. Being confined, these caused the land to sink and to rise several times and in various places. At last the surface gave away and ten countries were torn asunder and scattered; unable to stand the force of the convulsions, they sank with their 64,000,000 inhabitants.”

Before the Atlantean continent was submerged, the initiates of the Attantean Mysteries, carrying with them the secret doctrines entrusted to their keeping, immigrated into Egypt and other parts of the earth where they would be safe from the impending catastrophe. Thus their secret teaching—with its priceless value to subsequent ages—was preserved. They established centers of learning and promulgated the code, clothed in the language of symbolism, to such as they deemed worthy to receive it.

MENSÆ ISIACÆ SIVE TABVLÆ ÆNEÆ VETVSTISSIMÆ SACRIS
PRIMVM E MVSEO TORQVATI BEMBI VNDE ET BEMBINA DICITVR AN. M
HANC DEINDE IN FORMAM
SERENISSIMO PRINCIPI LEOPOLDO GVILIELMO ARCHIDVCI AVSTRIÆ SVPREMO
A
B


VM LITERIS CÆLATÆ. VERVS, ET GENVINVS TYPVS, QVAM
ACTAM ÆNEAS VICVS PARMENSIS EDIDIT ATQVE FERD.I.CÆSARI CONSECRAVIT
M CONTRACTAM
GVNDIÆ. GVBERNATORI NECNON MAGNO TEVTONICI ORD. MAGISTRO
C
D

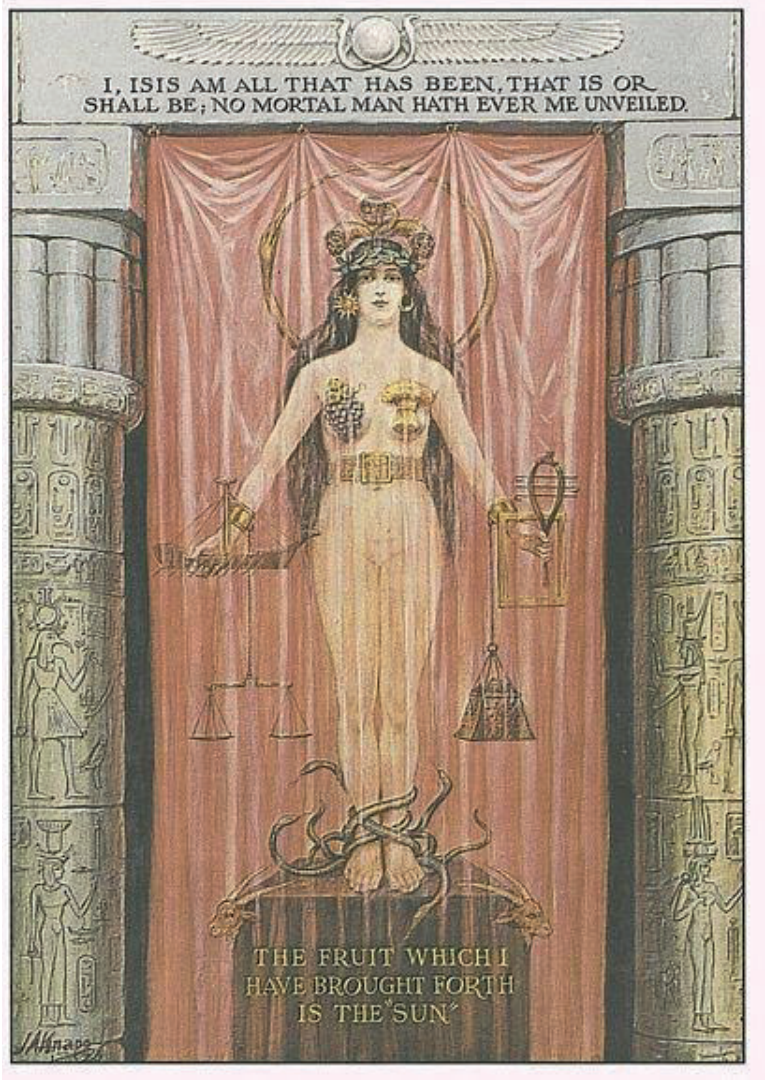
FROM KIRCHER'S *ŒDIPUS ÆGYPTIACUS*

THE BEMBINE TABLE OF ISIS.

Concerning the theurgic or magic sense in which the Egyptian priests exhibited in the Bembine Table of Isis the philosophy of sacrifice, rites, and ceremonies by a system of occult symbols, Athanasius Kircher writes: “The early priests believed that a great spiritual power was invoked by correct and unabridged sacrificial ceremonies. If one feature were lacking, the whole was vitiated, says Iamblichus. Hence they were most careful in all details, for they considered it absolutely essential for the entire chain of logical connections to be exactly according to ritual. Certainly for no other reason did they prepare and prescribe for future use the manuals, as it were, for conducting the rites. They learned, too,

what the first hieromancers—possessed, as it were, by a divine fury—devised as a system of symbolism for exhibiting their mysteries. These they placed in this Tablet of Isis, before the eyes of those admitted to the sanctum sanctorum in order to teach the natures of the Gods and the prescribed forms of sacrifice. Since each of the orders of Gods had its peculiar symbols, gestures, costumes, and ornaments, they thought it necessary to observe these in the whole apparatus of worship, as nothing was more efficacious in drawing the benign attention of the deities and genii.*** Thus their temples, remote from the usual haunts of men, contained representations of nearly every form in nature. First, in the pavement, they symbolized the physical economy of the world, using minerals, stones, and other things suitable for ornaments, including little streams of water. The walls showed the starry world, and the dome the world of genii. In the center was the altar, to suggest the emanations of the Supreme Mind from its center. Thus the entire interior constituted a picture of the Universe of Worlds. The priests in making sacrifices wore raiment adorned with figures similar to those attributed to the Gods. Their bodies were partially bare like those of the deities, and they themselves were divested of all material cares and practiced the strictest chastity.*** Their heads were veiled to indicate their charge of earthly things. Their heads and bodies where shaved, for they regarded hair as a useless excrescence. Upon the head they bore the same insignia as those attributed to the Gods. Thus arrayed, they regarded themselves to be transformed into that intelligence with which they continuously desired to be identified. For example, in order to call down to the world the soul and spirit of the Universe, they stood before the image shown in the throne in the center of our Tablet, wearing the same symbols as that figure and its attendants, and offered sacrifices. By these and the accompanying singing of hymns they believed that they infallibly drew the God’s attention to their prayer. And so they did in regard to the other regions of the Tablet, believing that of necessity the proper ritual properly carried out would evoke the deity desired. That this was the origin of the science of the oracles is apparent. As a touched chord produces a harmony of sound, likewise the adjoining chords respond though not touched. Similarly the idea they expressed by their concurrent acts while adoring the God came into accord with basic Idea and, by an intellectual union, it was returned to them deiformed, and they thus obtained the Idea of Ideas. Hence there sprang up in their souls, they thought, the gift of prophecy and divination, and they believed they could foretell future events, impeding evils, *etc.* For as in the Supreme Mind everything is simultaneous and spaceless, the future is therefore present in that Mind; and they thought that while the human mind was absorbed in the Supreme by contemplation, by that union they were enabled to know all the future. Nearly

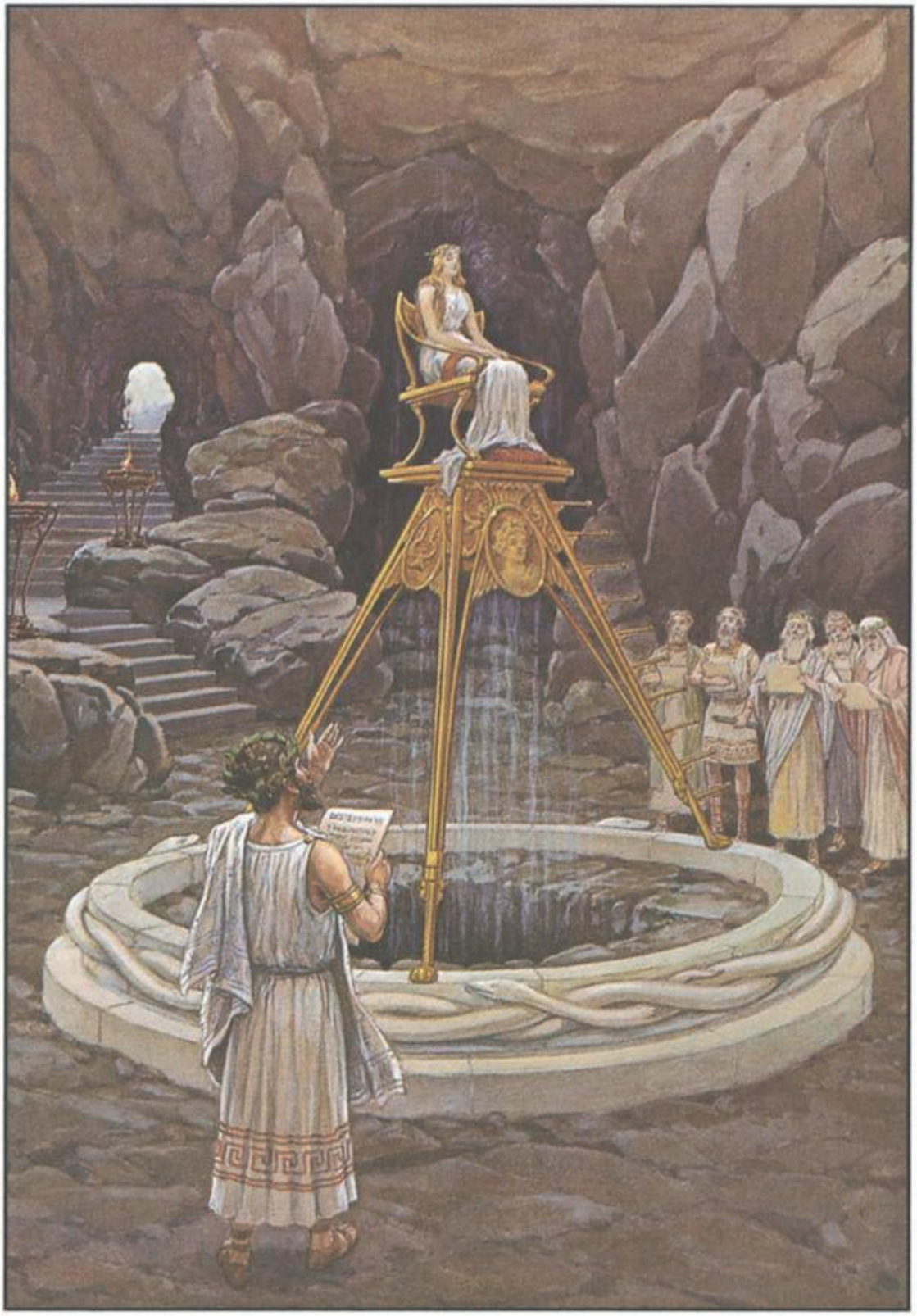
all that is represented in our Tablet consists of amulets which, by the analogy above described, would inspire them, under the described conditions, with the virtues of the Superior Power and enable them to receive good and avert evil. They also believed they could in this magical manner effect cures of diseases; that genii could be induced to appear to them during sleep and cure or teach them to cure the sick. In this belief they consulted the Gods about all sorts of doubts and difficulties, while adorned with the simulacra of the mystic rite and intently contemplating the Divine Ideas; and while so enraptured they believed the God by some sign, nod or gesture communicated with them, whether asleep or awake, concerning the truth or falsity of the matter in point." (See Œdipus Ægyptiacus.)


I, ISIS AM ALL THAT HAS BEEN, THAT IS OR SHALL BE; NO MORTAL MAN HATH EVER ME UNVEILED.
THE FRUIT WHICH I HAVE BROUGHT FORTH IS THE "SUN"

THE SAITIC ISIS.

I am Isis, mistress of the whole land: I was instructed by Hermes, and with Hermes I invented the writings of the nations, in order that not all should write with the same letters. I gave mankind their laws, and ordained what no one can alter. I am the eldest daughter of Kronos. I am the wife and sister of the king Osiris. I am she who rises in the dog star. I am she who is called the goddess of women.*** I am she who separated the heaven from the earth. I have pointed out their paths to the stars. I have invented seamanship.*** I have brought together men and women.*** I have ordained that the elders shall be beloved by the children. With my brother Osiris I made an end of cannibalism. I have instructed mankind in the mysteries. I have taught reverence of the divine statues. I have established the temple precincts. I have overthrown the dominion of the tyrants. I have caused men to love woman. I have made justice more powerful than silver and gold. I have caused truth to be considered beautiful." (See Erman's *Handbook of Egyptian Religion.)*

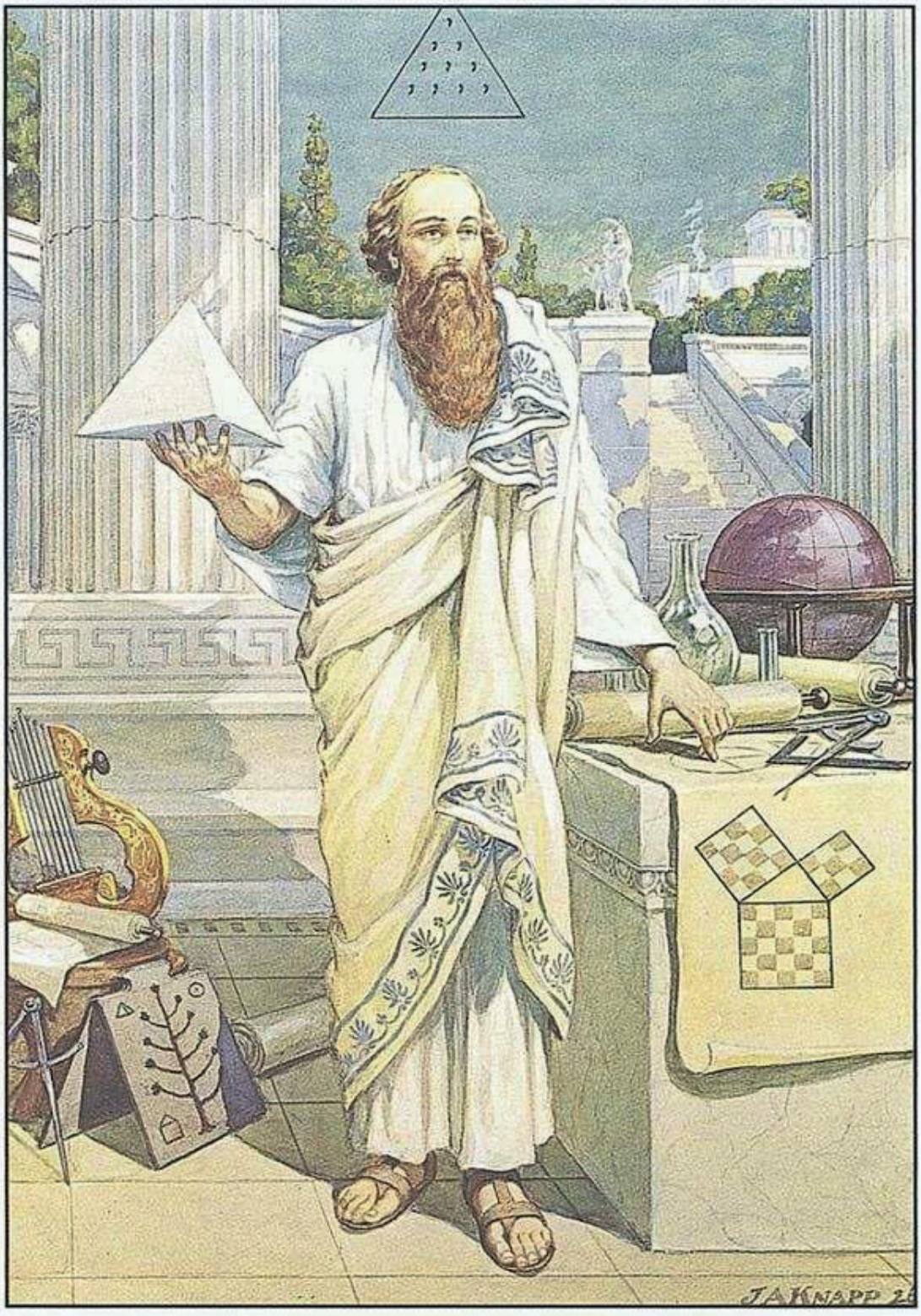
The face and form of Isis were covered with a veil of scarlet cloth, symbolic of ignorance and emotionalism which forever stand between man and Truth. Isis lifts her veil and discovers herself to the true and wise investigator who unselfishly, humbly, and earnestly seeks to understand the mysteries which surround him in the universe. Those to whom she reveals herself are warned to remain silent concerning the mysteries which they have seen. The great admonition of the Wise Men was: "If you know it, be silent." To the vulgar and profane, the infidel and disinterested one, she does not uncover her face, for they could not understand the secret processes of the invisible worlds.



CONSULTING THE ORACLE OF DELPHI.

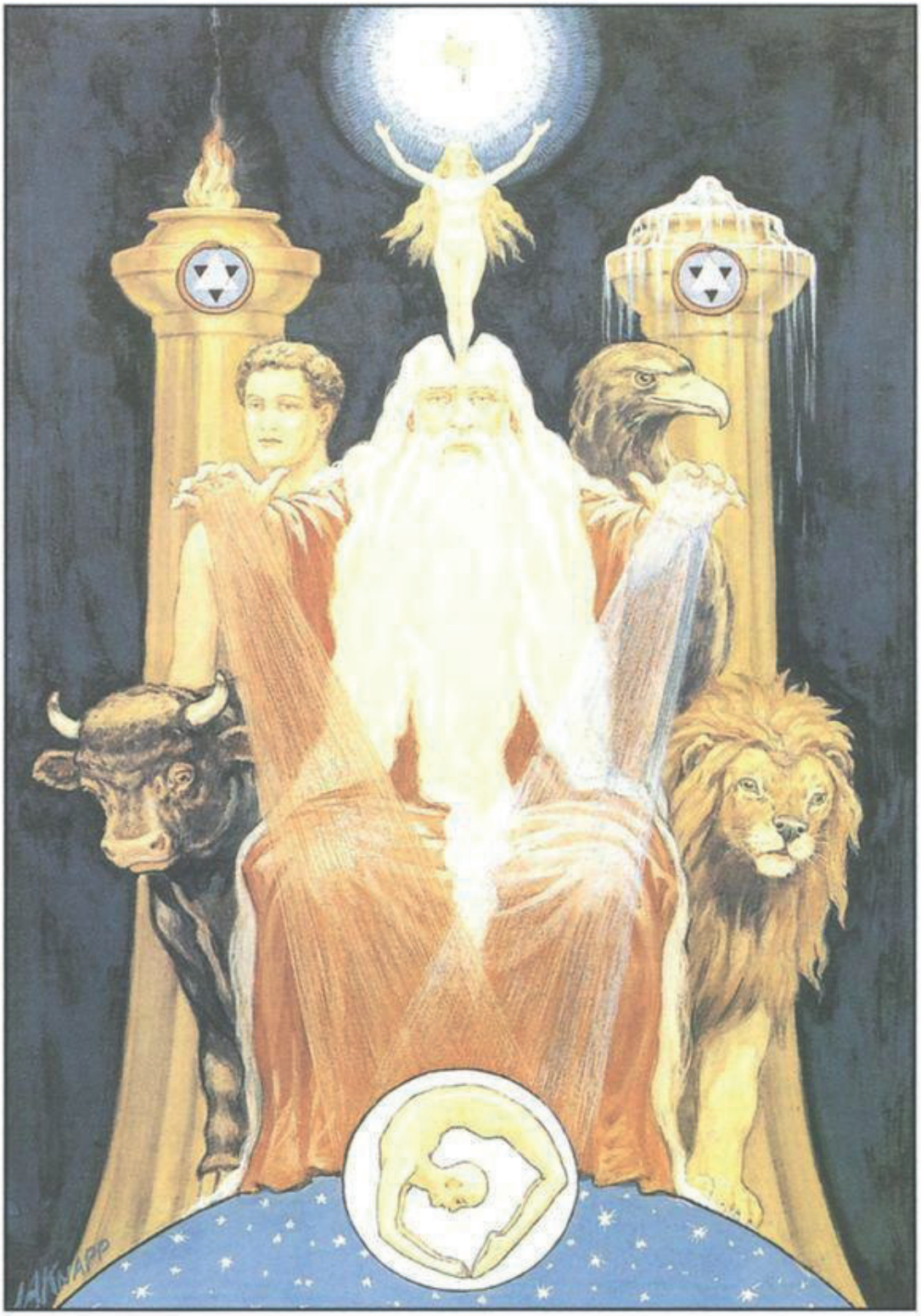
While the tripod and its base as here shown differ from the description of several authors, an attempt has been made to follow as closely as possible the symbolism concealed within the allegory of the oracle. The Delphic Mysteries used the oracle as their chief symbol, and it is the spiritual esoteric mystery rather than the historical and consequently unimportant aspect with which the student of symbolism is interested.

While the spirit inhabiting the fumes which rose continuously from the fissure entered into the body of the priestess, the tripod vibrated as though struck severe and repeated blows. Loud ctangings were heard, which echoed through the cavern. The din increased as the control of the dæmon over the priestess became more complete, and the rattling and crashing did not cease until the spirit released its hold upon the Pythia. The three legs of the tripod symbolize the three periods of time controlled by Apollo, namely, the past, the present, and the future. The space enclosed by the legs of the tripod forms the sacred Pythagorean tetrahedron with the prophetess seated upon its apex. As the priestess of Delphi is held aloft over the abyss of the oracle, supported only by three slender legs ending in claws, so the spiritual nature of man is suspended over the abyss of oblivion by three golden threads of Divine power. The face of Apollo appears upon the tripod, and around the base are coiled serpents to symbolize Python, whose decaying body lies beneath the Delphic shrine.


JA KNAPP 2

PYTHAGORAS OF CROTONA.

Though Pythagoras excelled Plato in the profundity of his philosophic deductions, the transcendental element in his doctrines has provoked the ridicule of a materialistic modern science. All too lightly the world has passed over the achievements of the first “philosopher” to whom it is indebted for so many of the basic theorems of mathematics, music, and astronomy. The twentieth century student of Greek philosophy has been taught to associate the name of Pythagoras with such puerile issues as his golden shin bone and his ban upon the eating of beans! It has also been held against Pythagoras that he delivered his discourses from behind a curtain, preached in allegories and enigmas, and revealed his scientific knowledge only to such initiated disciples as had spent many years in self-discipline. His sciolistic critics, however, have failed to consider the manner in which Pythagoras obtained his immense wealth of abstract learning. The Mysteries of Greece, Egypt, Persia, and India without exception bound their initiates to inviolable secrecy. Having accepted the obligations of these societies, Pythagoras had no honorable course other than to abide by their regulations. Iamblichus lists 218 men and 17 women among the most famous of the Pythagorean philosophers. It is thus evident that Pythagoras revealed his secrets to a considerable number of persons—probably all who he felt could understand and be benefited by his knowledge. The Pythagorean doctrine of mathematical philosophy may yet be accepted as the one system of thought able to cope with the riddle of existence.

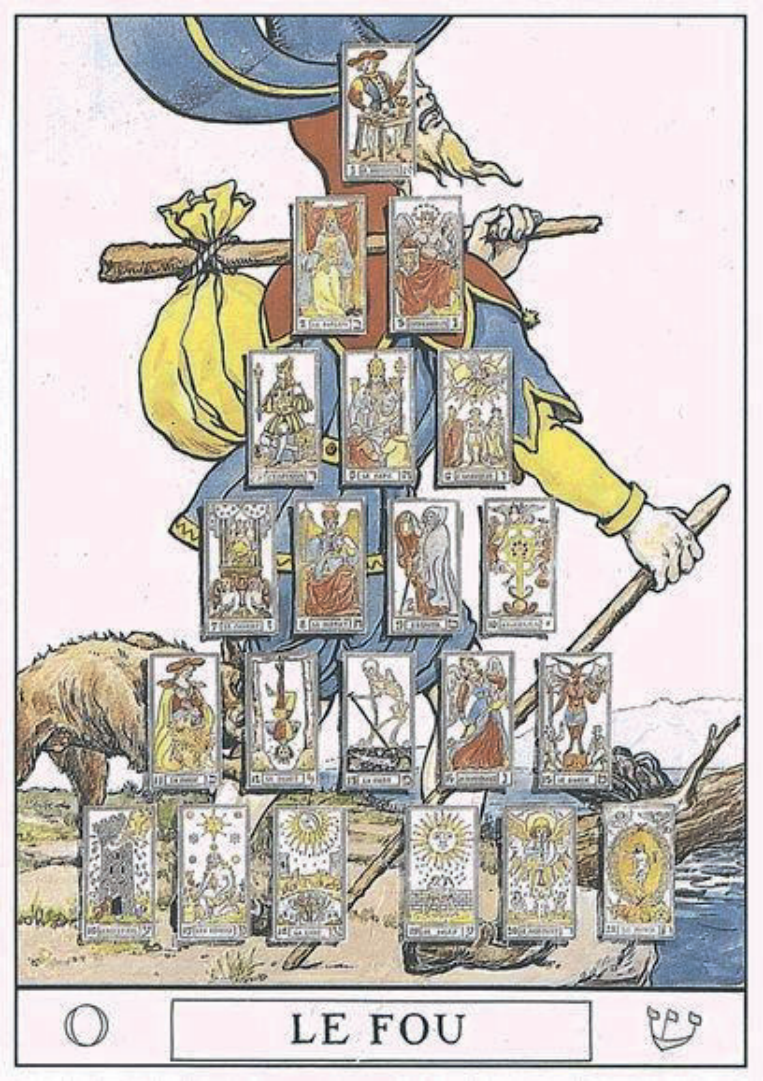

KNAPP

THE ANCIENT OF THE ANCIENTS.

In the Greater Holy Assembly it is written of the Ancient of the Ancients that He is the Concealed of the Concealed Ones, the Eternal of the Eternal Ones, the Mystery of the Mysteries, and that in His symbols He is knowable and unknowable. In the *Zohar* His robes are said to be white, but they are here shown as red to signify that the garments of Divinity partake of the nature of cosmic activity. His face is declared to be the likeness of a face vast, luminous, and terrible. He sits upon a throne of flaming light and the flashes of the fire are subject to His will. The white light streaming from His head illumines four hundred thousand worlds. (Some texts read forty thousand superior worlds.) The glory of this light shall be given unto the just, who are called “the sacred fruits of the Tree of the Sephiroth.”

Thirteen thousand myriads of worlds come into tight from His skull, from which issues forth a mysterious dew having the power to awaken the spiritually dead into everlasting life. The length of “The Great Face” is declared to be three hundred and seventy thousand myriads of worlds; therefore it is called “The Long Face.” The appearance of the Ancient of the Ancients is that of the Aged of the Aged, who has been before the beginning and whose throne stands upon the firmament. By the Aged of the Aged is willed “The Short Face,” or creation, which is the chariot of the Most Holy of the Most Holy.

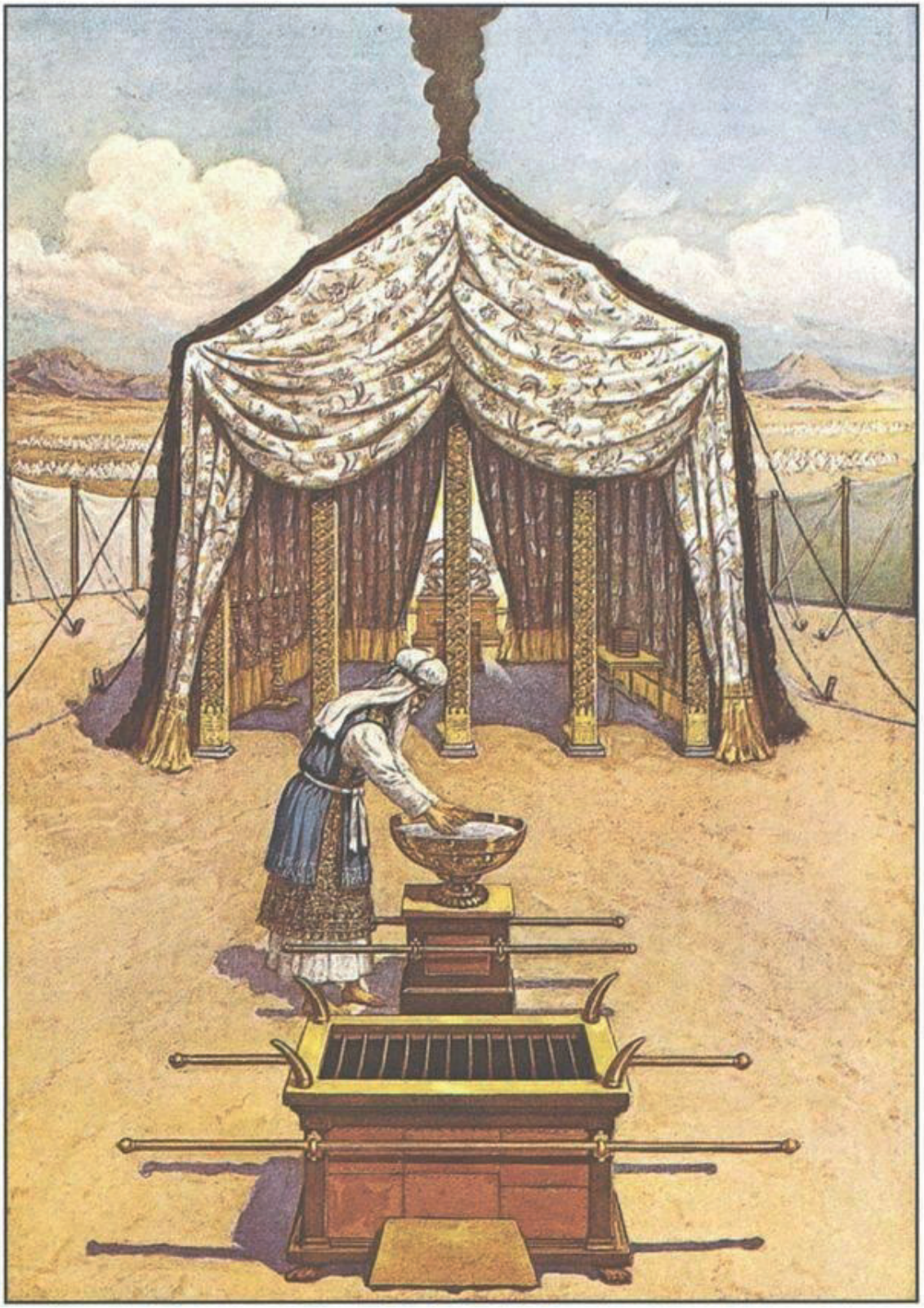
The hair and beard of the Ancient of the Ancients extend to the uttermost parts of the universe. From His skull hang down a thousand thousand myriads, seven thousand and five hundred curling hairs which are not mingled lest confusion exist; and in each curl are four hundred and ten locks of hair, and these hairs all and singular radiate into four hundred and ten worlds. In the hollow of His skull is the aerial membrane of the supreme hidden Wisdom and His brain extends and goes forth by thirty-two paths. From the beard of the Ancient of the Ancients flow thirteen fountains and from His hands pour the Mother and Father Rays, by which existence comes into being. The head of the Ancient of the Ancients is cleft like that of Zeus to permit wisdom in the form of Athena to emerge therefrom.



A LAYOUT OF MAJOR TAROT TRUMPS.

The Tarot consists of a deck of 78 curiously emblazoned cards of uncertain origin and date. The deck is divided into two general sections, of which the larger contains 56 cards—termed the minor trumps—and the smaller, 22 cards—termed the major trumps. The minor trumps are further divided into four suits—each containing 14 cards—somewhat similar to those of modern playing cards. The four suits are called Rods (Clubs), Swords (Spades), Cups (Hearts), and Coins (Diamonds). The pip cards of each suit ascend from the ace to the 10, and their denominations are shown by groups of their respective emblems, as 6 Rods, 4 Cups, 9 Coins, or 3 Swords. The court cards of each suit are four in number,

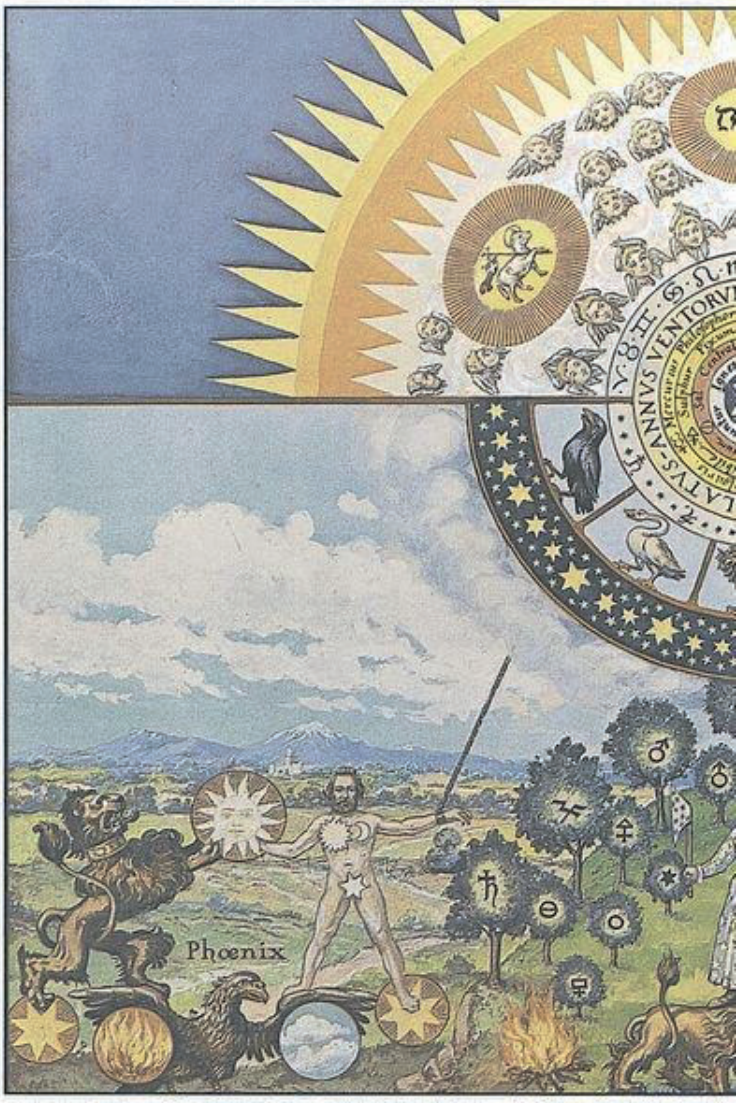
termed King, Queen, Knight, and Page. The Kings and Queens are usually depicted seated, the Knights on horseback, and the Pages standing. Each holds the emblem of its suit. The major trumps are also divided into two sections, one of which is composed of 21 cards, usually numbered, and the other of a single card, either unnumbered or marked with a cipher. The accepted order of the 21 cards with their names is as follows. (1) the *Juggler;* (2) the *High Priestess,* or *Female Pope;* (3) the *Empress;* (4) the *Emperor;* (5) the *Pope;* (6) the *Lovers,* or *Marriage;* (7) the *Chariot;* (8) *Justice;* (9) the *Hermit;* (10) the *Wheel of Fortune;* (11) *Strength;* (12) the *Hanged Man;* (13) *Death; (14) Temperance;* (15) the *Devil;* (16) the *Fire from Heaven;* (17) the *Stars;* (18) the Moon; (19) the *Sun;* (20) the *Judgment;* and (21) the *World.* The unnumbered card upon which the others are spread is designated the Fool.

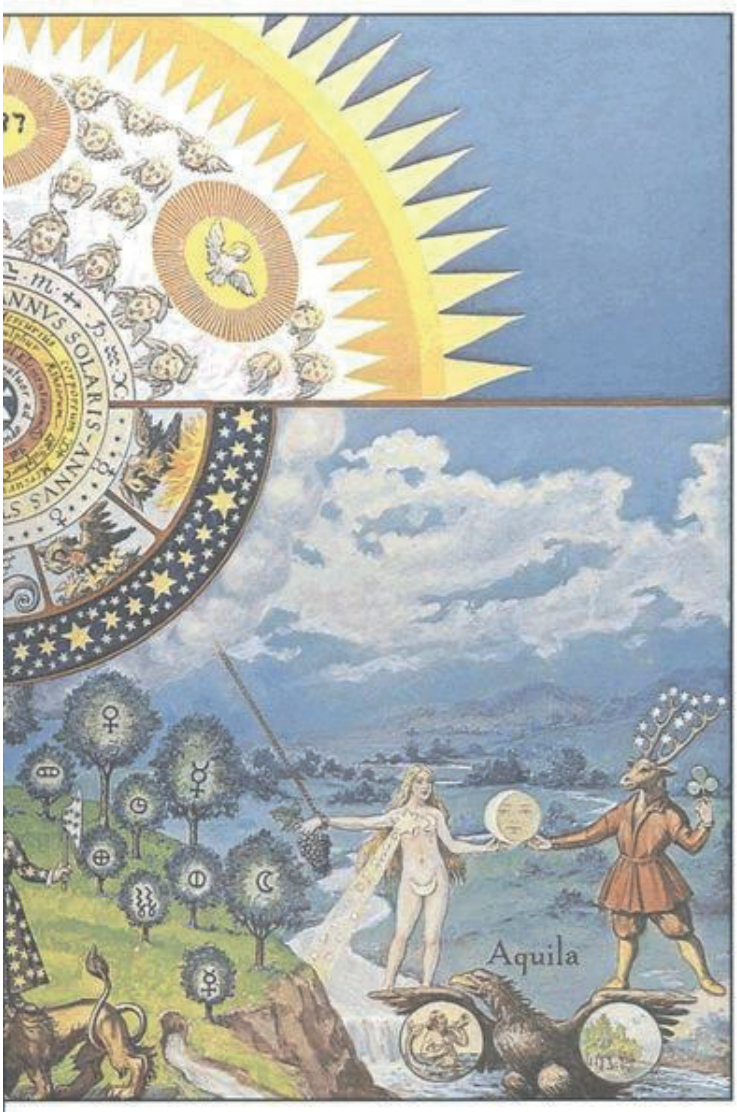


THE COURTYARD OF THE TABERNACLE.

While the religion of the early Israelites has been adversely criticized, its disparagers have failed to give consideration to the time and environment of which it was a natural and consistent product. It is impossible to judge one civilization by comparing it with another widely separated from it in point of time. The modern world looks upon many ancient practices as cruel and barbarous, but is guilty every day of offenses which would have proved equally revolting to the sensibilities of ancient peoples! At no time has the world been composed of a majority of thinking people. Only here and there is found an intellect actually seeking to solve not only the problems of its own destiny but also those of others. The esoteric, spiritual side of every religion is a beautiful, humanitarian, and transcendent code, to be understood only by those who have raised themselves above the plane of the prosaic and the conventional. For ages man has served the "letter of the law," not realizing that "*the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*"

To the true scholar and mystic, the Old Testament is an endless source of inspiration. To the intellectualist. it is a cause of ceaseless wrangling, and he argues over dates and places, overlooking entirely the sublime truths concealed under the crude allegories of Scripture. He who understands thoroughly the Mystery of the Tabernacle needs no other religion, for he will be at one with the seers of all ages. As he goes about his daily life, every man—unknown to himself—is a priest of the Tabernacle; for as priests were appointed by Jehovah to keep His house in order, so each individual is, in a like manner, appointed to keep his own little world in order. Nature is the Tabernacle, man is the priest, and the one God of all nations and all peoples dwells in every human soul behind the embroidered veil of the "Holy of Holies."


Phœnix



REDRAWN FROM MUSEUM HERMETICUM REFORMATUM ET AMPLIFICATUM.

GRAND ROSICRUCIAN ALCHEMICAL FORMULA.

In the heavens and surrounded by both an outer and an inner aureole and by hierarchies of celestial beings are the radiant symbols of the Holy Trinity:יהוה(the Father?), the Lamb (the Son), and the Dove (the Holy Ghost). The respective dignities of the heavenly host are determined by the number and arrangement of their wings. The glory of the Godhead and the invisible world is concealed from the inferior creation partly by a line and partly by the circle of the starry heavens, itself obscured by clouds. Five birds—a crow (Saturn, lead); a swan (Jupiter, tin); a cock (Mars, iron); a pelican (Venus, copper); and the phœnix (Mercury,

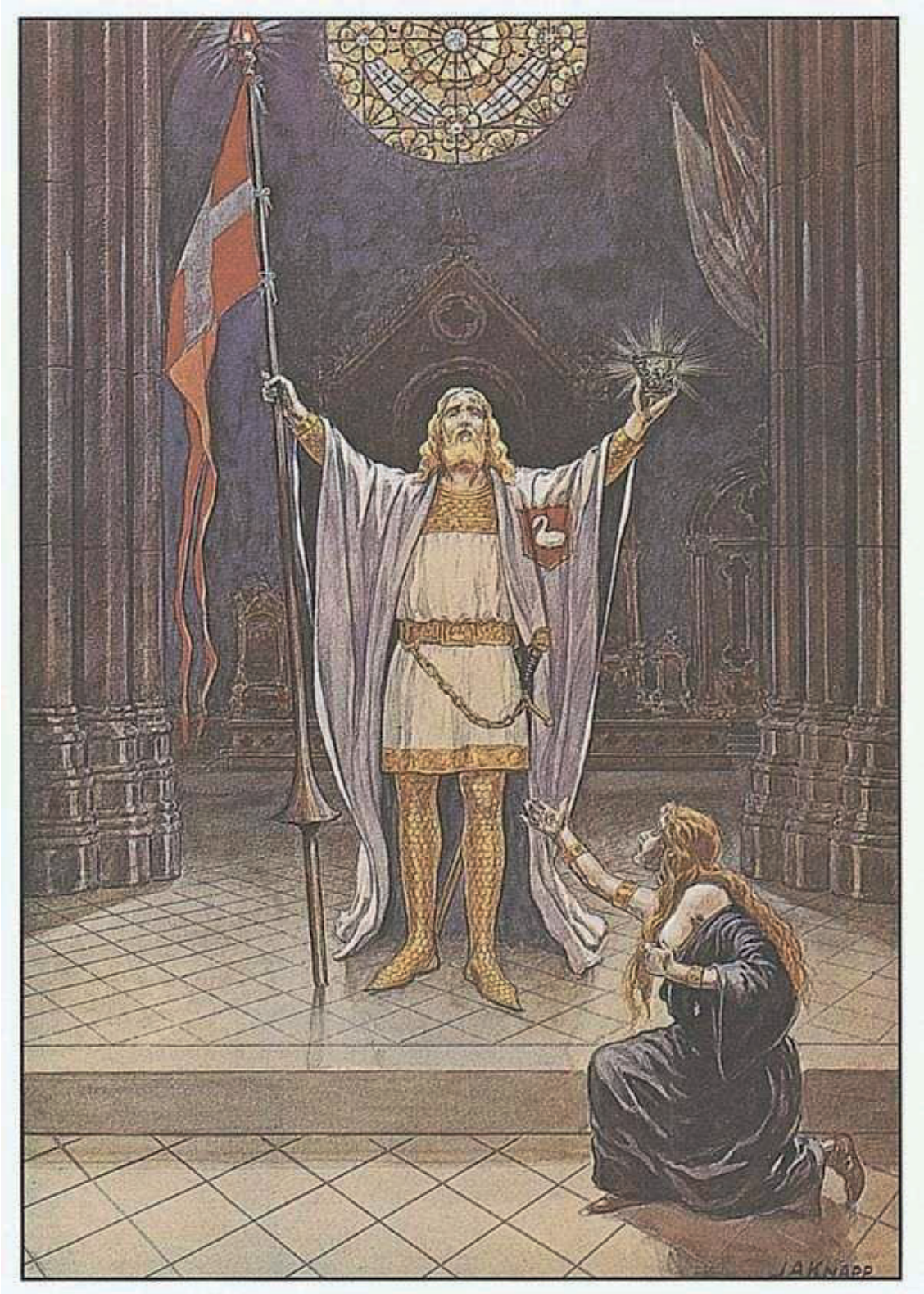
quicksilver)—occupy the half circle directly within the band of the starry heavens. The upper half of the blue circle containing the five planetary signs is occupied by the zodiacal signs. In the green circle appear the words: “The solar year, the stellar year, and the year of winds”; in the yellow circle, “The mercury of the sages, corporeal mercury, and common, or visible, mercury”; in the orange circle, “Combustible sulphur, fixed sulphur, and volatile, or ethereal, sulphur”; in the red circle, “Elementary salt, earthly salt. and central salt”; and in the violet circle, “Four kinds of fire are requisite for the work.” The white central triangle contains the figure of the solar mercury.

The entire upper section of the plate is an esoteric diagram of the constitution of the threefold spiritual sun. In the lower foreground is a hill upon which grow a number of trees, each bearing the symbol of an alchemical substance. (For details consult Basil Valentine’s table of alchemical symbols in chapter XXXV.) At the lower right and represented by a nocturnal scene is the inferior world, while at the lower left and represented by a diurnal scene is the superior world. Thus water is symbolized by the right side of the plate and fire by the left side. Under the wings of the phœnix are two circles containing the symbols of fire and air; under the wings of the eagle are two other circles containing the symbols of earth and water. The human figures, one male and the other female, both attached to the superior wold by a golden chain and bearing upon their bodies the symbols of the creative forces, stand for the divine (male) and human (female) principles in every creature. The spirit and will are represented by a lion rampant; the soul and intuition by a deer with twelve lights or stars upon its horns and bearing a trifoliate leaf symbolic of the threefold division of all natural things.

In the center of the picture is the figure of philosophic equilibrium and the accomplishment of the *magnum opus.* The double-bodied lion emphasizes to the initiated the necessity for the final union of all diversified parts; also that light and darkness (symbols of all natural opposites) are two bodies with a single head. Upon this strange creature which he has fabricated by his art and which symbolizes the reconciliation of apparently irreconcilable elements, stands the alchemistic philosopher. The stars upon his robe reveal the luminous nature of the purified and regenerated adept, and with the maces (the illumined intellect) he destroys the illusion of light and darkness and, uniting the various scattered parts of cosmos, fashions therefrom the philosophic androgyne. In the *Hermetic Museum* this plate is accompanied by the following quotation: “By the word of the Lord were the heavens established, and their hosts by the breath of His mouth. The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the wold. All things are satisfied with

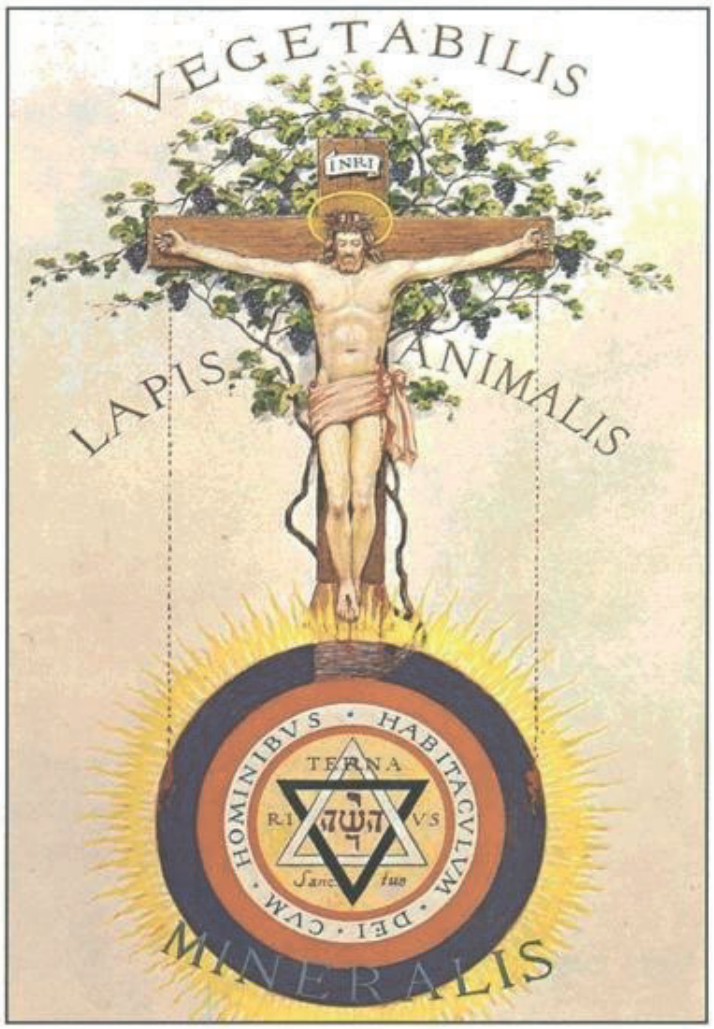
Thy goodness, 0 Lord. Thou turnest away Thy face, they are troubled. Thou turnest away Thy Spirit, they die and return again to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit and they are created, and renewest the face of the earth. Thy glory is for everlasting." In the *Hermetic Museum* a free rendering of the Emerald Table of Hermes (q.v.) is also annexed to this plate.

Only by profound contemplation and familiarity with the principles of mediæval alchemy may the true spirit of chemical mysticism be discovered. In the above plate is set forth the complete key to the regeneration of the metals, the transmutation of earthliness into celestial splendor, and the mystery of generation which has been so sadly and ignorantly misinterpreted by the sciolists of the twentieth century.


J.A.KNAPP

PARSIFAL AND THE HOLY GRAIL.

In the great temple on Mount Salvat stands Parsifal, the third and last king of the Holy Grail, holding aloft the scintillating green Grail Cup and the sacred spear. From the tip of the spear trickles an endless stream of blood. Before Parsifal kneels Kundry (Kundalini), the temptress, who, released from the spell of the evil Klingsor, adores the sacred relics of the Passion. Of the Grail Mysteries, Hargrave Jennings writes: "The council of the Knights or Brothers of the Holy Grail, or Graël, was a reflex of the sacred bond sanctified by sacraments which held the majestic and mystic Rosicrucians together. These were really the guardians of the greater mysteries. In this sense of the mysterious and the sacred, the 'garter' of the 'Most noble the Order of the Garter—the first of chivalry—is not a 'garter' at all, but the '-Garder,' or 'Keeper,' the sacredest and holiest guardian of the the supernatural chastity of none other than the most exalted feminine personality (of course in the abstract and miraculous sense), the very foundation of Christianity—the 'Cestus' or girdle of the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the Queen of Heaven, with her victorious foot, for all the ages past and to come, trampling upon the Dragon, in her celestial purity, as the'Mother of Christ.'" (See *Phallicism.)* The key to the Grail Mysteries will be apparent if in the sacred spear is recognized the pineal gland with its peculiar pointlike projection and in the Holy Grail the pituitary body containing the mysterious Water of Life. Mount Salvat is the human body; the domed temple upon its summit, the brain; and the castle of Klingsor in the dark valley below, the animal nature which lures the knights (brain energies) into the garden of illusion and perversion. Parsifal, as the purified candidate, becomes the Master of the holy relics and of the sacred science for which they stand; Kundry, having fulfilled the purpose of her existence, dies at the foot of the altar with the immortal words: "I serve!"

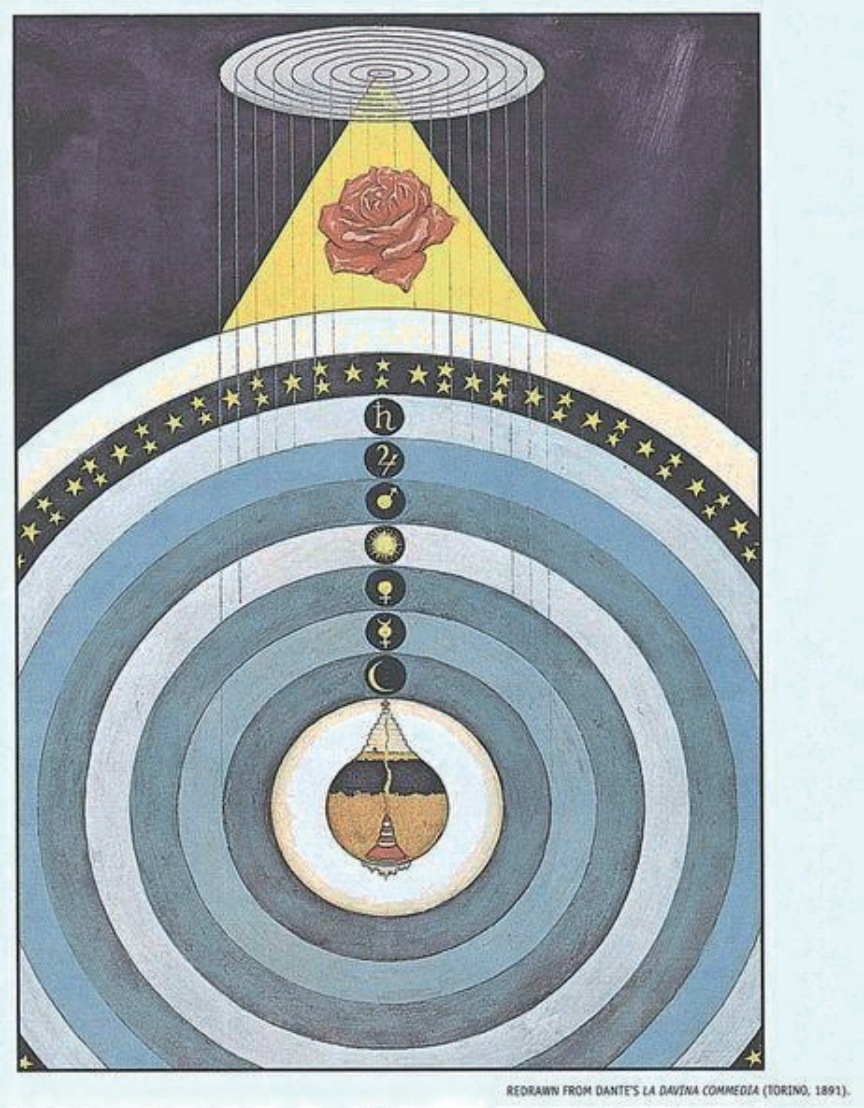


A ROSICRUCIAN CRUCIFIXION.

The solar crucifixion is an outstanding example of the astronomical knowledge possessed by the so-called prehistoric world. “In Herschel’s ground-plan of the universe in human form,” writes Albert Ross Parsons, “our solar system is located at the heart of the Divine Man of the skies. Hence, the catastrophe in our solar system, by which the ecliptic was sundered from the celestial equator, was a rupture or piercing of the heart of the Divine Man. The ecliptic and equator no longer coinciding, they formed a cross upon which the Divine Man was transfixed in space. This idea was familiar to the Hindus and to Plato. Hence arose the prehistoric Christianity, the religion of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world, of the Book of Revelation.” *(See New Light from the*

Great Pyramid.)

Ignoring the story of the crucifixion in its literal sense, the Gnostics considered only its cosmic import. In Rosicrucian mysticism, the Christ Spirit is said to have established a direct link with the earth through the blood which poured from the wounds in the hands, feet, and side of Jesus. Being the ancient symbol of the secret doctrine, the cross represents to the initiated that divine institution which, releasing the heavenly man from his animal part, launches the spiritual nature into the sphere of Reality. Therefore the cross may be said to be the emblem of philosophic death, anc the Mysteries cannot achieve their end until they have caused each of their neophytes to pass victoriously through the cycle of suffering, death and resurrection. The entire procedure is concealed in the symbolism of the grape. As one author has perceived, the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane is analogous to the crushing of the grapes in the wine press. He who comprehends the mystery of the sacramental cup possesses the key to human regeneration. Man, crucified, passes through death upon the symbol of life and attains to life upon the symbol of death. The break between the Self and the not-self is thus complete and the spirit, emerging from its chrysalis, leaves the empty shell behind as the token of its attainment. The agony of the Savior, consequently, is not the agony of death but the agony of birth. Only to him who has fourd his life by losing it is the mystery comprehensible.



REDRAWN FROM DANTE'S *LA DIVINA COMMEDIA* (TORINO, 1891).

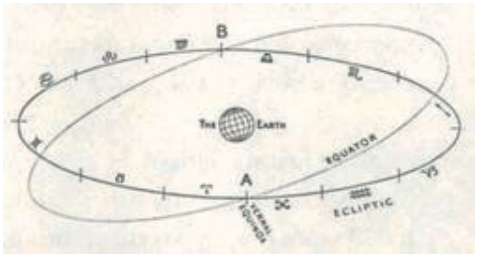
THE KEY TO DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY.

In his article on *The* Topography *of Dante's Spiritual World,* Charles Allen Dinsmore writes: "He [Dante] maintained the earth is round, having a hemisphere of land, in the centre of which stands Jerusalem. The other hemisphere originally contained land; but when Lucifer, hurled from Heaven, was about to fall upon it, the soil 'veiled itself with the sea' and came to the other side of the globe, making a hemisphere of land and a hemisphere of water. The interior of the earth also retreated before the descending Lucifer, leaving a vast conical-shaped cavity, which extended from the centre of the globe to the surface of the inhabited hemisphere. The void which evil made in the world is

the abode of lost souls, and is divided into nine circles, of which the seventh is subdivided into three smaller circles, the eighth into ten ditches, and the ninth into four belts. At the centre of the earth, and thus at the point farthest from God, is Lucifer, with his head and body in one hemisphere, and his legs in the other, so that when Virgil and Dante turned upon his haunch, they passed the centre of gravity and emerged from one hemisphere into the other."

In the midst of the hemisphere of water stands a conical mountain, Purgatory, rising in seven steps. On its summit is the terrestrial Paradise or Garden of Eden where Dante met Beatrice. According to *The Divine Comedy,* as the soul climbs the seven steps of Purgatory it is cleansed of the seven mortal sins, and it then ascends through the seven spheres of the Ptolemaic universe. To each of the planets is assigned one of the seven virtues. In the eighth sphere the soul receives a knowledge of spiritual truths and in the ninth, or highest, it is absorbed into the celestial mysteries.

The word *zodiac* is derived from the Greek ζωδακός *(zodiakos),* which means "a circle of animals," or, as some believe, "little animals." It is the name given by the old pagan astronomers to a band of fixed stars about sixteen degrees wide, apparently encircling the earth. Robert Hewitt Brown, 32°, states that the Greek word *zodiakos* comes from *zo-on,* meaning "an animal." He adds: "This latter word is compounded directly from the primitive Egyptian radicals, *zo,* life, and *on,* a being."



THE EQUINOXES AND SOLSTICES.

The plane of the zodiac intersects the celestial equator at an angle of approximately 23' 28'. The two points of intersection (A and *B*) are called the equinoxes.

The Greeks, and later other peoples influenced by their culture, divided the band of the zodiac into twelve sections, each being sixteen degrees in width and thirty degrees in length. These divisions were called the Houses of the Zodiac.

The sun during its annual pilgrimage passed through each of these in turn. Imaginary creatures were traced in the star groups bounded by these rectangles; and because most of them were animal—or part animal—in form, they later became known as the Constellations, or Signs, of the Zodiac.

There is a popular theory concerning the origin of the zodiacal creatures to the effect that they were products of the imagination of shepherds, who, watching their flocks at night, occupied their minds by tracing the forms of animals and birds in the heavens. This theory is untenable, unless the “shepherds” be regarded as the shepherd priests of antiquity. It is unlikely that the zodiacal signs were derived from the star groups which they now represent. It is far more probable that the creatures assigned to the twelve houses are symbolic of the qualities and intensity of the sun’s power while it occupies different parts of the zodiacal belt.

On this subject Richard Payne Knight writes: “The emblematical meaning, which certain animals were employed to signify, was only some particular property generalized; and, therefore, might easily be invented or discovered by the natural operation of the mind: but the collections of stars, named after certain animals, have no resemblance whatever to those animals; which are therefore merely signs of convention adopted to distinguish certain portions of the heavens, which were probably consecrated to those particular personified attributes, which they respectively represented.” *(The Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology.)*

Some authorities are of the opinion that the zodiac was originally divided into ten (instead of twelve) houses, or “solar mansions.” In early times there were two separate standards—one solar and the other lunar—used for the measurement of the months, years, and seasons. The solar year was composed of ten months of thirty-six days each, and five days sacred to the gods. The lunar year consisted of thirteen months of twenty-eight days each, with one day left over. The solar zodiac at that time consisted of ten houses of thirty-six degrees each.

The first six signs of the zodiac of twelve signs were regarded as benevolent, because the sun occupied them while traversing the Northern Hemisphere. The 6,000 years during which, according to the Persians, Ahura-Mazda ruled His universe in harmony and peace, were symbolic of these six signs. The second six were considered malevolent, because while the sun was traveling the Southern Hemisphere it was winter with the Greeks, Egyptians, and Persians. Therefore these six months were symbolic of the 6,000 years of misery and suffering

caused by the evil genius of the Persians, Ahriman, who sought to overthrow the power of Ahura-Mazda.

Those who hold the opinion that before its revision by the Greeks the zodiac consisted of only ten signs adduce evidence to show that Libra (the Scales) was inserted into the zodiac by dividing the constellation of Virgo-Scorpio (at that time one sign) into two parts, thus establishing "the balance" at the point of equilibrium between the ascending northern and the descending southern signs. (See *The Rosicrucians, Their Rites and Mysteries,* by Hargrave Jennings.) On this subject Isaac Myer states: "We think that the Zodiacal constellations were first ten and represented an immense androgenic man or deity; subsequently this was changed, resulting in Scorpio and Virgo and making eleven; after this from Scorpio, Libra, the Balance, was taken, making the present twelve." (*The Qabbalah.*) Each year the sun passes entirely around the zodiac and returns to the point from which it started—the vernal equinox—and each year it falls just a little short of making the complete circle of the heavens in the allotted period of time. As a result, it crosses the equator just a little behind the spot in the zodiacal sign where it crossed the previous year. Each sign of the zodiac consists of thirty degrees, and as the sun loses about one degree every seventy-two years, it regresses through one entire constellation (or sign) in approximately 2,160 years, and through the entire zodiac in about 25,920 years. (Authorities disagree concerning these figures.) This retrograde motion is called the *precession of the equinoxes.* This means that in the course of about 25,920 years, which constitute one Great Solar or Platonic Year, each one of the twelve constellations occupies a position at the vernal equinox for nearly 2,160 years, then gives place to the *previous* sign.

Among the ancients the sun was always symbolized by the figure and nature of the constellation through which it passed at the vernal equinox. For nearly the past 2,000 years the sun has crossed the equator at the vernal equinox in the constellation of Pisces (the Two Fishes). For the 2,160 years before that it crossed through the constellation of Aries (the Ram). Prior to that the vernal equinox was in the sign of Taurus (the Bull). It is probable that the form of the bull and the bull's proclivities were assigned to this constellation because the bull was used by the ancients to plow the fields, and the season set aside for plowing and furrowing corresponded to the time at which the sun reached the segment of the heavens named Taurus.

Albert Pike describes the reverence which the Persians felt for this sign and the method of astrological symbolism in vogue among them, thus: "In

Zoroaster's cave of initiation, the Sun and Planets were represented, overhead, in gems and gold, as was also the Zodiac. The Sun appeared, emerging from the back of Taurus." In the constellation of the Bull are also to be found the "Seven Sisters"—the sacred Pleiades—famous to Freemasonry as the Seven Stars at the upper end of the Sacred Ladder.

In ancient Egypt it was during this period—when the vernal equinox was in the sign of Taurus—that the Bull, Apis, was sacred to the Sun God, who was worshiped through the animal equivalent of the celestial sign which he had impregnated with his presence at the time of its crossing into the Northern Hemisphere. This is the meaning of an ancient saying that the celestial Bull "broke the egg of the year with his horns."

Sampson Arnold Mackey, in his *Mythological Astronomy of the Ancients Demonstrated,* makes note of two very interesting points concerning the bull in Egyptian symbolism. Mr. Mackey is of the opinion that the motion of the earth that we know as the alternation of the poles has resulted in a great change of relative position of the equator and the zodiacal band. He believes that originally the band of the zodiac was at right angles to the equator, with the sign of Cancer opposite the north pole and the sign of Capricorn opposite the south pole. It is possible that the Orphic symbol of the serpent twisted around the egg attempts to show the motion of the sun in relation to the earth under such conditions. Mr. Mackey advances the *Labyrinth of Crete,* the name *Abraxas,* and the magic formula, *abracadabra,* among other things, to substantiate his theory. Concerning *abracadabra* he states: "But the slow progressive disappearance of the Bull is most happily commemorated in the vanishing series of letters so emphatically expressive of the great astronomical fact. For ABRACADABRA is The Bull, the only Bull. The ancient sentence split into its component parts stands thus: Ab'r-achad-ab'ra, i. e., Ab'r, the Bull; achad, the only, &:c.—Achad is one of the names of the Sun, given him in consequence of his Shining ALONE,—he is the ONLY Star to be seen when he is seen—the remaining ab'ra, makes the whole to be, The Bull, the only Bull; while the repetition of the name omitting a letter, till all is gone, is the most simple, yet the most satisfactory method that could have been devised to preserve the memory of the fact; and the name of Sorapis, or Serapis, given to the Bull at the above ceremony puts it beyond all doubt. * This word (Abracadabra) disappears in eleven decreasing stages; as in the figure. And what is very remarkable, a body with three heads is folded up by a Serpent with eleven Coils, and placed by Sorapis: and the eleven Volves of the Serpent form a triangle similar to that formed by the ELEVEN diminishing lines of the abracadabra."

Nearly every religion of the world shows traces of astrological influence. The Old Testament of the Jews, its writings overshadowed by Egyptian culture, is a mass of astrological and astronomical allegories. Nearly all the mythology of Greece and Rome may be traced in star groups. Some writers are of the opinion that the original twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet were derived from groups of stars, and that the starry handwriting on the wall of the heavens referred to words spelt out, with fixed stars for consonants, and the planets, or luminaries, for vowels. These, coming into ever-different combinations, spelt words which, when properly read, foretold future events.

As the zodiacal band marks the pathway of the sun through the constellations, it results in the phenomena of the seasons. The ancient systems of measuring the year were based upon the equinoxes and the solstices. The year always began with the vernal equinox, celebrated March 21 with rejoicing to mark the moment when the sun crossed the equator northward up the zodiacal arc. The summer solstice was celebrated when the sun reached its most northerly position, and the day appointed was June 21. After that time the sun began to descend toward the equator, which it recrossed southbound at the autumnal equinox, September 21. The sun reached its most southerly position at the winter solstice, December 21.

Four of the signs of the zodiac have been permanently dedicated to the equinoxes and the solstices; and, while the signs no longer correspond with the ancient constellations to which they were assigned, and from which they secured their names, they are accepted by modern astronomers as a basis of calculation. The vernal equinox is therefore said to occur in the constellation of Aries (the Ram). It is fitting that of all beasts a Ram should be placed at the head of the heavenly flock forming the zodiacal band. Centuries before the Christian Era, the pagans revered this constellation. Godfrey Higgins states: “This constellation was called the ‘Lamb of God.’ He was also called the ‘Savior,’ and was said to save mankind from their sins. He was always honored with the appellation of , Dominus’ or ‘Lord.’ He was called the ‘Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.’ The devotees addressing him in their litany, constantly repeated the words,‘O Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Grant us Thy peace.”’ Therefore, the Lamb of God is a title given to the sun, who is said to be reborn every year in the Northern Hemisphere in the sign of the Ram, although, due to the existing discrepancy between the signs of the zodiac and the actual star groups, it actually rises in the sign of Pisces.

The summer solstice is regarded as occurring in Cancer (the Crab), which the Egyptians called the *scarab*—a beetle of the family Lamellicornes, the head of

the insect kingdom, and sacred to the Egyptians as the symbol of Eternal Life. It is evident that the constellation of the Crab is represented by this peculiar creature because the sun, after passing through this house, proceeds to walk backwards, or descend the zodiacal arc. Cancer is the symbol of generation, for it is the house of the Moon, the great Mother of all things and the patroness of the life forces of Nature. Diana, the moon goddess of the Greeks, is called the Mother of the World. Concerning the worship of the feminine or maternal principle, Richard Payne Knight writes: “By attracting or heaving the waters of the ocean, she naturally appeared to be the sovereign of humidity; and by seeming to operate so powerfully upon the constitutions of women, she equally appeared to be the patroness and regula-tress of nutrition and passive generation: whence she is said to have received her nymphs, or subordinate personifications, from the ocean; and is often represented by the symbol of the sea crab, an animal that has the property of spontaneously detaching from its own body any limb that has been hurt or mutilated, and reproducing another in its place.” *(The Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology.)* This water sign, being symbolic of the maternal principle of Nature, and recognized by the pagans as the origin of all life, was a natural and consistent domicile of the moon.

The autumnal equinox apparently occurs in the constellation of Libra (the Balances). The scales tipped and the solar globe began in pilgrimage toward the home of winter. The constellation of the Scales was placed in the zodiac to symbolize the power of choice, by means of which man may weigh one problem against another. Millions of years ago, when the human race was in the making, man was like the angels, who knew neither good nor evil. He *fell* into the state of the knowledge of good and evil when the gods gave him the seed for the mental nature. From man’s mental reactions to his environments he distills the product of experience, which then aids him to regain his lost position plus an individualized intelligence. Paracelsus said: “The body comes from the elements, the soul from the stars, and the spirit from God. All that the intellect can conceive of comes from the stars [the spirits of the stars, rather than the material constellations].”

The constellation of Capricorn, in which the winter solstice theoretically takes place, was called *The House of Death,* for in winter all life in the Northern Hemisphere is at its lowest ebb. Capricorn is a composite creature, with the head and upper body of a goat and the tail of a fish. In this constellation the sun is least powerful in the Northern Hemisphere, and after passing through this constellation it immediately begins to increase. Hence the Greeks said that Jupiter (a name of the Sun God) was suckled by a goat. A new and different

sidelight on zodiacal symbolism is supplied by John Cole, in *A Treatise on the Circular Zodiac of Tentyra, in Egypt:* "The symbol therefore of the Goat rising from the body of a fish [Capricorn], represents with the greatest propriety the mountainous buildings of Babylon rising out of its low and marshy situation; the two horns of the Goat being emblematical of the two towns, Nineveh and Babylon, the former built on the Tigris, the latter on the Euphrates; but both subjected to one sovereignty."

The period of 2,160 years required for the regression of the sun through one of the zodiacal constellations is often termed an *age.* According to this system, the *age* secured its name from the sign through which the sun passes year after year as it crosses the equator at the vernal equinox. From this arrangement are derived the terms *The Taurian Age, The Aryan Age, The Piscean Age,* and *The Aquarian Age.* During these periods, or *ages,* religious worship takes the form of the appropriate celestial sign—that which the sun is said to assume as a personality in the same manner that a spirit assumes a body. These twelve signs are the jewels of his breastplate and his light shines forth from them, one after the other.

From a consideration of this system, it is readily understood why certain religious symbols were adopted during different ages of the earth's history; for during the 2,160 years the sun was in the constellation of Taurus, it is said that the Solar Deity assumed the body of Apis, and the Bull became sacred to Osiris. (For details concerning the astrological ages as related to Biblical symbolism, see *The Message of the Stars* by Max and Augusta Foss Heindel.) During the Aryan Age the Lamb was held sacred and the priests were called *shepherds.* Sheep and goats were sacrificed upon the altars, and a scapegoat was appointed to bear the sins of Israel.

During the Age of Pisces, the Fish was the symbol of divinity and the Sun God fed the multitude with two small fishes. The frontispiece of Inman's *Ancient Faiths* shows the goddess Isis with a fish on her head; and the Indian Savior God, Christna, in one of his incarnations was cast from the mouth of a fish.

Not only is Jesus often referred to as the *Fisher of Men,* but as John P. Lundy writes: "The word Fish is an abbreviation of this whole title, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior, and Cross; or as St. Augustine expresses it, 'If you join together the initial letters of the five Greek words, ᾽Ιησος Χρστος 8εου Υὸς ∑ωτρ, which mean Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, they will make ΙΧθΥΣ, Fish, in which word Christ is mystically understood, because He was able to live in the abyss of this mortality as in the depth of waters, that is, without sin.'" *(Monumental Christianity.)* Many Christians observe Friday, which is sacred to the Virgin

(Venus), upon which day they shall eat fish and not meat. The sign of the fish was one of the earliest symbols of Christianity; and when drawn upon the sand, it informed one Christian that another of the same faith was near.

Aquarius is called the *Sign of the Water Bearer,* or the man with a jug of water on his shoulder mentioned in the New Testament. This is sometimes shown as an angelic figure, supposedly androgynous, either pouring water from an urn or carrying the vessel upon its shoulder. Among Oriental peoples, a water vessel alone is often used. Edward Upham, in his *History and Doctrine of Budhism,* describes Aquarius as being "in the shape of a pot and of a color between blue and yellow; this Sign is the single house of Saturn." When Herschel discovered the planet Uranus (sometimes called by the name of its discoverer), the second half of the sign of Aquarius was allotted to this added member of the planetary family. The water pouring from the urn of Aquarius under the name of "the waters of eternal life" appears many times in symbolism. So it is with all the signs. Thus the sun in its path controls whatever form of worship man offers to the Supreme Deity.

There are two distinct systems of astrological philosophy. One of them, the Ptolemaic, is geocentric: the earth is considered the center of the solar system, around which the sun, moon, and planets revolve. Astronomically, the geocentric system is incorrect; but for thousands of years it had proved its accuracy when applied to the material nature of earthly things. A careful consideration of the writings of the great occultists and a study of their diagrams reveal the fact that many of them were acquainted with another method of arranging the heavenly bodies.

The other system of astrological philosophy is called the heliocentric. This posits the sun in the center of the solar system, where it naturally belongs, with the planets and their moons revolving about it. The great difficulty, however, with the heliocentric system is that, being comparatively new, there has not been sufficient time to experiment successfully and catalogue the effects of its various aspects and relationships. Geocentric astrology, as its name implies, is confined to the earthy side of nature, while heliocentric astrology may be used to analyze the higher intellectual and spiritual faculties of man.

The important point to be remembered is that when the sun was said to be in a certain sign of the zodiac, the ancients really meant that the sun occupied the opposite sign and cast its long ray into the house in which they enthroned it. Therefore, when it is said that the sun is in Taurus, it means (astronomically) that the sun is in the sign opposite to Taurus, which is Scorpio. This resulted in two

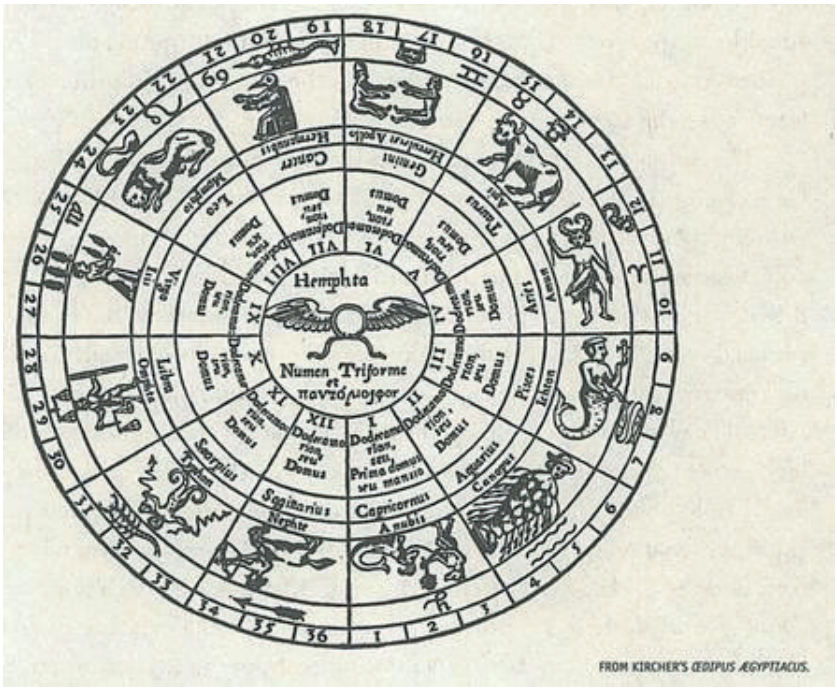
distinct schools of philosophy: one geocentric and exoteric, the other heliocentric and esoteric. While the ignorant multitudes worshiped the house of the sun's reflection, which in the case described would be the Bull, the wise revered the house of the sun's actual dwelling, which would be the Scorpion, or the Serpent, the symbol of the concealed spiritual mystery. This sign has three different symbols. The most common is that of a Scorpion, who was called by the ancients the *backbiter,* being the symbol of deceit and perversion; the second (and less common) form of the sign is a Serpent, often used by the ancients to symbolize wisdom.

Probably the rarest form of Scorpio is that of an Eagle. The arrangement of the stars of the constellation bears as much resemblance to a flying bird as to a scorpion. Scorpio, being the sign of occult initiation, the flying eagle—the king of birds—represents the highest and most spiritual type of Scorpio, in which it transcends the venomous insect of the earth. As Scorpio and Taurus are opposite each other in the zodiac, their symbolism is often closely intermingled. The Hon. E. M. Plunket, in *Ancient Calendars and Constellations,* says: "The Scorpion (the constellation Scorpio of the Zodiac opposed to Taurus) joins with Mithras in his attack upon the Bull, and always the genii of the spring and autumn equinoxes are present in joyous and mournful attitudes."

The Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians, who knew the sun as a Bull, called the zodiac a series of furrows, through which the great celestial Ox dragged the plow of the sun. Hence the populace offered up sacrifice and led through the streets magnificent steers, bedecked with flowers and surrounded with priests, dancing girls of the temple, and musicians. The philosophic elect did not participate in these idolatrous ceremonials, but advocated them as most suitable for the types of mind composing the mass of the population. These few possessed a far deeper understanding, as the Serpent of Scorpio upon their foreheads—the *Urœus*—bore witness.

The sun is often symbolized with its rays in the form of a shaggy mane. Concerning the Masonic significance of Leo, Robert Hewitt Brown, 32°, has written: "On the 21 st of June, when the sun arrives at the summer solstice, the constellation Leo—being but 30° in advance of the sun—appears to be leading the way, and to aid by his powerful paw in lifting the sun up to the summit of the zodiacal arch. * This visible connection between the constellation Leo and the return of the sun to his place of power and glory, at the summit of the Royal Arch of heaven, was the principal reason why that constellation was held in such high esteem and reverence by the ancients. The astrologers distinguished Leo as

the ‘sole house of the sun,’ and taught that the world was created when the sun was in that sign.‘The lion was adored in the East and the West by the Egyptians and the Mexicans. The chief Druid of Britain was styled a lion.”’ *(Stellar Theology and Masonic Astronomy.)* When the Aquarian Age is thoroughly established, the sun will be in Leo, as will be noted from the explanation previously given in this chapter regarding the distinction between geocentric and heliocen-tic astrology. Then, indeed, will the secret religions of the world include once more the raising to initiation by the Grip of the Lion’s Paw. (Lazarus will come forth.) The antiquity of the zodiac is much in dispute. To contend that it originated but a mere few thousand years before the Christian Era is a colossal mistake on the part of those who have sought to compile data concerning its origin. The zodiac necessarily must be ancient enough to go backward to that period when its signs and symbols coincided exactly with the positions of the constellations whose various creatures in their natural functions exemplified the outstanding features of the sun’s activity during each of the twelve months. One author, after many years of deep study on the subject, believed man’s concept of the zodiac to be at least five million years old. In all probability it is one of the many things for which the modern world is indebted to the Atlantean or the Lemurian civilizations. About ten thousand years before the Christian Era there was a period of many ages when knowledge of every kind was suppressed, tablets destroyed, monuments torn down, and every vestige of available material concerning previous civilizations completely obliterated. Only a few copper knives, some arrowheads, and crude carvings on the walls of caves bear mute witness of those civilizations which preceded this age of destruction. Here and there a few gigantic structures have remained which, like the strange monoliths on Easter Island, are evidence of lost arts and sciences and lost races. The human race is exceedingly old. Modern science counts its age in tens of thousands of years; occultism, in tens of millions. There is an old saying that “Mother Earth has shaken many civilizations from her back,” and it is not beyond reason that the principles of astrology and astronomy were evolved millions of years before the first white man appeared.



HIEROGLYPHIC PLAN, BY HERMES, OF THE ANCIENT ZODIAC.

The inner circle contains the hieroglyph of Hemphta, the triform and pantamorphic deity. In the six concentric bands surrounding the inner circle are (from within outward): (1) the numbers of the zodiacal houses in figures and also in words; (2) the modern names of the houses; (3) the Greek or the Egyptian names of the Egyptian deities assigned to the houses; (4) the complete figures of these deities; (5) the ancient or the modern zodiacal signs, sometimes both; (6) the number of decans or subdivisions of the houses.

The occultists of the ancient world had a most remarkable understanding of the principle of evolution. They recognized all life as being in various stages of *becoming.* They believed that grains of sand were in the process of *becoming* human in consciousness but not necessarily in form; that human creatures were in the process of *becoming* planets; that planets were in the process of *becoming* solar systems; and that solar systems were in the process of *becoming* cosmic chains; and so on *ad infinitum.* One of the stages between the solar system and the cosmic chain was called the *zodiac;* therefore they taught that at a certain time a solar system breaks up into a zodiac. The houses of the zodiac become the thrones for twelve Celestial Hierarchies, or as certain of the ancients state, ten Divine Orders. Pythagoras taught that 10, or the unit of the decimal system, was

the most perfect of all numbers, and he symbolized the number ten by the *lesser tetractys*, an arrangement of ten dots in the form of an upright triangle.

The early star gazers, after dividing the zodiac into its houses, appointed the three brightest stars in each constellation to be the joint rulers of that house. Then they divided the house into three sections of ten degrees each, which they called *decans.* These, in turn, were divided in half, resulting in the breaking up of the zodiac into seventy-two duodecans of five degrees each. Over each of these duodecans the Hebrews placed a celestial intelligence, or angel, and from this sytem has resulted the Qabbalistic arrangement of the seventy-two sacred names, which correspond to the seventy-two flowers, knops, and almonds upon the seven-branched Candlestick of the Tabernacle, and the seventy-two men who were chosen from the Twelve Tribes to represent Israel.

The only two signs not already mentioned are Gemini and Sagittarius. The constellation of Gemini is generally represented as two small children, who, according to the ancients, were born out of eggs, possibly the ones that the Bull broke with his horns. The stories concerning Castor and Pollux, and Romulus and Remus, may be the result of amplifying the myths of these celestial Twins. The symbols of Gemini have passed through many modifications. The one used by the Arabians was the peacock. Two of the important stars in the constellation of Gemini still bear the names of Castor and Pollux. The sign of Gemini is supposed to have been the patron of phallic worship, and the two obelisks, or pillars, in front of temples and churches convey the same symbolism as the Twins.

The sign of Sagittarius consists of what the ancient Greeks called a centaur—a composite creature, the lower half of whose body was in the form of a horse, while the upper half was human. The centaur is generally shown with a bow and arrow in his hands, aiming a shaft far off into the stars. Hence Sagittarius stands for two distinct principles: first, it represents the spiritual evolution of man, for the human form is rising from the body of the beast; secondly, it is the symbol of aspiration and ambition, for as the centaur aims his arrow at the stars, so every human creature aims at a higher mark than he can reach.

Albert Churchward, in *The Signs and Symbols of Primordial Man,* sums up the influence of the zodiac upon religious symbolism in the following words: “The division here [is] in twelve parts, the twelve signs of the Zodiac, twelve tribes of Israel, twelve gates of heaven mentioned in Revelation, and twelve entrances or portals to be passed through in the Great Pyramid, before finally reaching the highest degree, and twelve Apostles in the Christian doctrines, and

the twelve original and perfect points in Masonry."

The ancients believed that the theory of man's being made in the image of God was to be understood literally. They maintained that the universe was a great organism not unlike the human body, and that every phase and function of the Universal Body had a correspondence in man. The most precious Key to Wisdom that the priests communicated to the new initiates was what they termed the law *of analogy.* Therefore, to the ancients, the study of the stars was a sacred science, for they saw in the movements of the celestial bodies the ever-present activity of the Infinite Father.

The Pythagoreans were often undeservedly criticized for promulgating the so-called doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls. This concept as circulated among the uninitiated was merely a blind, however, to conceal a sacred truth. Greek mystics believed that the spiritual nature of man descended into material existence from the Milky Way—the seed ground of souls—through one of the twelve gates of the great zodiacal band. The spiritual nature was therefore said to incarnate in the form of the symbolic creature created by Magian star gazers to represent the various zodiacal constellations. If the spirit incarnated through the sign of Aries, it was said to be born in the body of a ram; if in Taurus, in the body of the celestial bull. All human beings were thus symbolized by twelve mysterious creatures through the natures of which they were able to incarnate into the material world. The theory of transmigration was not applicable to the visible material body of man, but rather to the invisible immaterial spirit wandering along the pathway of the stars and sequentially assuming in the course of evolution the forms of the sacred zodiacal animals.

In the Third Book of the *Mathesis* of Julius Firmicus Maternus appears the following extract concerning the positions of the heavenly bodies at the time of the establishment of the inferior universe: "According to Æsculapius, therefore, and Anubius, to whom especially the divinity Mercury committed the secrets of the astrological science, the geniture of the world is as follows: They constituted the Sun in the 15th part of Leo, the Moon in the 15th part of Cancer, Saturn in the 15th part of Capricorn, Jupiter in the 15th part of Sagittary, Man in the 15th part of Scorpio, Venus in the 15th part of Libra, Mercury in the 15th part of Virgo, and the Horoscope in the 15th part of Cancer. Conformably to this geniture, therefore, to these conditions of the stars, and the testimonies which they adduce in confirmation of this geniture, they are of opinion that the destinies of men, also, are disposed in accordance with the above arrangement as may be learnt from that book of Æsculapius which is called Μυρογενεσς (i.e.,

Ten Thousand, or an innumerable multitude of Genitures), in order that nothing in the several genitures of men may be found to be discordant with the above-mentioned geniture of the world." The seven ages of man are under the control of the planets in the following order: infancy, the moon; childhood, Mercury; adolescence, Venus; maturity, the sun; middle age, Mars; advanced age, Jupiter; and decrepitude and dissolution, Saturn.

XI

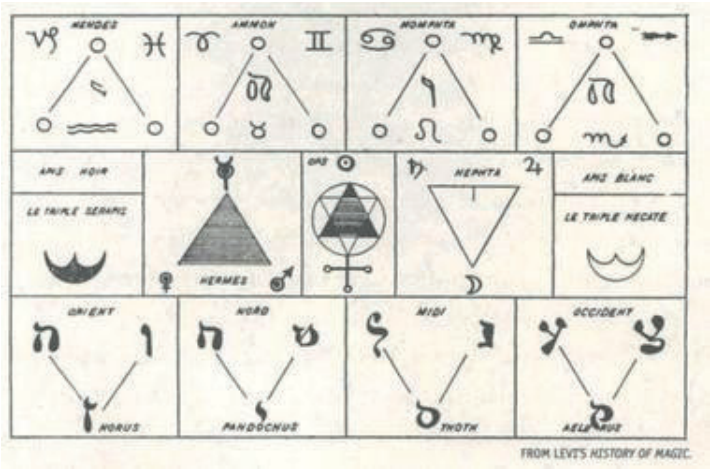
The Bembine Table of Isis

Manuscript by Thomas Taylor contains the following remarkable paragraph:

"Plato was initiated into the 'Greater Mysteries' at the age of 49. The initiation took place in one of the subterranean halls of the Great Pyramid in Egypt. The ISIAC TABLE formed the altar, before which the Divine Plato stood and received that which was always his, but which the ceremony of the Mysteries enkindled and brought from its dormant state. With this ascent, after three days in the Great Hall, he was received by the Hierophant of the Pyramid (the hierophant was seen only by those who had passed the three days, the three degrees, the three dimensions) and given verbally the Highest Esoteric Teachings, each accompanied with Its appropriate Symbol. After a further three months' sojourn in the halls of the Pyramid, the Initiate Plato was sent out into the world to do the work of the Great Order, as Pythagoras and Orpheus had been before him."

Before the sacking of Rome in 1527 there is no historical mention of the *Mensa Isiaca* (Tablet of Isis). At that time the Tablet came into the possession of a certain locksmith or ironworker, who sold it at an exorbitant price to Cardinal Bembo, a celebrated antiquary, historiographer of the Republic of Venice, and afterwards librarian of St. Mark's. After his death in 1547 the Isiac Tablet was acquired by the House of Mantua, in whose museum it remained until 1630, when troops of Ferdinand II captured the city of Mantua. Several early writers on the subject have assumed that the Tablet was demolished by the ignorant soldiery for the silver it contained. The assumption, however, was erroneous. The Tablet fell into the hands of Cardinal Pava, who presented it to the Duke of Savoy, who in turn presented it to the King of Sardinia. When the French conquered Italy in 1797 the Tablet was carried to Paris. In 1809, Alexandre Lenoir, writing of the *Mensa Isiaca,* said it was on exhibition at the Bibliothèque Nationale. Upon the establishment of peace between the two countries it was

returned to Italy. In his Guide to Northern Italy, Karl Baedeker describes the *Mensa Isiaca* as being in the center of Gallery 2 in the Museum of Antiquities at Turin.



LEVI'S KEY TO THE BEMBINE TABLE.

"The Isiac Tablet, writes Levi, is a Key to the Ancient Book of Thoth, which has survived to some extent the lapse of centuries and is pictured to us in the still comparatively ancient set of Tarocchi Cards. To him the Book of Thoth was a résumé of the esoteric learning of the Egyptians, after the decadence of their civilization, this tore became crystallized in an hieroglyphic form as the Tarot; this Tarot having become partially or entirely forgotten or misunderstood, its pictured symbols fell into the hands of the sham diviners, and of the providers of the public amusement by games of Cards. The modern Tarot, or Tarocchi pack of cards consists of 78 cards, of which 22 form a special group of trumps, or pictorial design: the remaining 56 are composed of four suits of 10 numerals and four court cards. King, Queen, Knight, and Knave or Valet; the suits are Swords (Militaryism), Cups (Sacerdocy), Clubs or Wands (Agriculture), and Shekels or Coins (Commerce), answering respectively to our Spades, Hearts, Clubs, and Diamonds. Our purpose is with the 22 trumps, these form the special characteristic of the pack and are the lineal descendants of the Hieroglyphics of the Tarot. These 22 correspond to the letters of the Hebrew and other sacred alphabets, which fall naturally into three classes of a Trio of Mothers, a Heptad of doubles, and a duodecad of simple letters. They are also considered as a triad of Heptads and one apart a system of Initiation and an Uninitiate." (See Westcott's *The Isiac Tablet.)*

A faithful reproduction of the original Tablet was made in 1559 by the celebrated Æneas Vicus of Parma, and a copy of the engraving was given by the Chancellor of the Duke of Bavaria to the Museum of Hieroglyphics. Athanasius Kircher describes the Tablet as “five palms long and four wide.” W. Wynn Westcott says it measures 50 by 30 inches. It was made of bronze and decorated with encaustic or smalt enamel and silver inlay. Fosbroke adds: “The figures are cut very shallow, and the contour of most of them is encircled by threads of silver. The bases upon which the figures were seated or reclined, and left blank in the prints, were of silver and are torn away.” (See *Encyclopædia of Antiquities.)*

Those familiar with the fundamental principles of Hermetic philosophy will recognize in the *Mensa Isiaca* the key to Chaldean, Egyptian, and Greek theology. In his *Antiquities,* the learned Benedictine, Father Montfaucon, admits his inability to cope with the intricacies of its symbolism. He therefore doubts that the emblems upon the Tablet possess any significance worthy of consideration and ridicules Kircher, declaring him to be more obscure than the Tablet itself. Laurentius Pignorius reproduced the Tablet in connection with a descriptive essay in 1605, but his timidly advanced explanations demonstrated his ignorance concerning the actual interpretation of the figures.

In his *Œdipus Ægyptiacus,* published in 1654, Kircher attacked the problem with characteristic avidity. Being peculiarly qualified for such a task by years of research in matters pertaining to the secret doctrines of antiquity, and with the assistance of a group of eminent scholars, Kircher accomplished much towards an exposition of the mysteries of the Tablet. The master secret, however, eluded even him, as Eliphas Levi has shrewdly noted in his History of *Magic.*

“The learned Jesuit,” writes Levi, “divined that it contained the hieroglyphic key to sacred alphabets, though he was unable to develop the explanation. It is divided into three equal compartments; above are the twelve houses of heaven and below are the corresponding distributions of labor [work periods] throughout the year, while in the middle place are twenty-one sacred signs answering to the letters of the alphabet. In the midst of all is a seated figure of the pantomorphic IYNX, emblem of universal being and corresponding as such to the Hebrew *Yod,* or to that unique letter from which all the other letters were formed. The IYNX is encircled by the Ophite triad, answering to the Three Mother Letters of the Egyptian and Hebrew alphabets. On the right are the Ibimorphic and Serapian triads; on the left are those of Nepthys and Hecate, representing active and passive, fixed and volatile, fructifying fire and generating water. Each pair of

triads in conjunction with the center produces a septenary, and a septenary is contained in the center. The three septenaries furnish the absolute number of the three worlds, as well as the complete number of primitive letters, to which a complementary sign is added, like zero to the nine numerals."

Levi's hint may be construed to mean that the twenty-one figures in the center section of the Table represent the twenty-one major trumps of the Tarot cards. If this be so, is not the zero card, cause of so much controversy, the nameless crown of the Supreme Mind, the crown being symbolized by the hidden triad in the upper part of the throne in the center of the Table? Might not the first emanation of this Supreme Mind be well symbolized by a juggler or magician with the symbols of the four lower worlds spread out on a table before him: the rod, the sword, the cup, and the coin? Thus considered, the zero card belongs nowhere among the others but is in fact the fourth dimensional point from which they all emanated and consequently is broken up into the twenty-one cards (letters) which, when gathered together, produce the zero. The cipher appearing upon this card would substantiate this interpretation, for the cipher, or circle, is emblematic of the superior sphere from which issue the lower worlds, powers, and letters.

Westcott carefully collected the all too meager theories advanced by various authorities and in 1887 published his now extremely rare volume, which contains the only detailed description of the Isiac Tablet published in English since Humphreys translated Montfaucon's worthless description in 1721. After explaining his reticence to reveal that which Levi evidently felt was better left concealed, Westcott sums up his interpretation of the Tablet as follows:

"The diagram of Levi, by which he explains the mystery of the Tablet, shows the Upper Region divided into the four seasons of the year, each with three signs of the Zodiac, and he has added the four-lettered sacred name, the Tetragrammaton, assigning Jod to Aquarius, that is Canopus, He to Taurus, that is Apis, Vau to Leo, that is Momphta, and He final to Typhon. Note the Cherubic parallel—Man, Bull, Lion and Eagle. The fourth form is found either as Scorpion or Eagle depending upon the Occult good or evil intention: in the Demotic Zodiac, the Snake replaces the Scorpion.

"The Lower Region he ascribes to the twelve *simple* Hebrew letters, associating them with the four quarters of the horizon. Compare the Sepher Yetzirah, Cap. v., sec. 1.

"The Central Region he ascribes to the Solar powers and the Planetary. In the

middle we see above, the Sun, marked Ops, and below it is a Solomon's Seal, above a cross; a double triangle Hexapla, one light and one dark triangle superposed, the whole forming a sort of complex symbol of Venus. To the Ibimorphos he gives the three dark planets, Venus, Mercury, and Mars placed around a dark triangle erect, denoting Fire. To the Nephthæan triad he gives three light planets, Saturn, Luna, and Jupiter, around a light inverted triangle which denotes Water. There is a necessary connection between water, female power, passive principle, Binah, and Sephirotic Mother, and Bride. (See the *Kabbalah* by Mathers.) Note the ancient signs for the planets were all composed of a Cross, Solar Disc and Crescent: Venus is a cross below a Sun disc, Mercury, a disc with a crescent above and cross below, Saturn is a Cross whose lowest point touches the apex of the crescent; Jupiter is a Crescent whose lowest point touches the left hand end of a cross: all these are deep mysteries. Note that Levi in his original plate transposed Serapis and Hecate, but not the Apis noir and Apis blanc, perhaps because of the head of Bes being associated by him with Hecate. Note that having referred the 12 simple letters to the lower, the 7 double must correspond to the central region of the planets, and then the great triad A.M.S. the mother letters representing Air, Water, and Fire remain to be pictured, around S the Central lynx, or Yod, by the Ophionian Triad the two Serpents and the Leonine Sphynx. Levi's word OPS in the centre is the Latin Ops, Terra, genius of the Earth; and the Greek Ops, Rhea, or Kubele (Cybele) often drawn as a goddess seated in a chariot drawn by lions; she is crowned with turrets, and holds a Key." (See *The Isiac Tablet.)*

The essay published in French by Alexandre Lenoir in 1809, while curious and original, contains little real information on the Tablet, which the author seeks to prove was an Egyptian calendar or astrological chart. As both Montfaucon and Lenoir—in fact all writers on the subject since 1651—either have based their work upon that of Kircher or have been influenced considerably by him, a careful translation has been made of the latter's original article (eighty pages of seventeenth-century Latin). The double-page plate in the color insert is a faithful reproduction made by Kircher from the engraving in the Museum of Hieroglyphics. The small letters and numbers used to designate the figures were added by him to clarify his commentary and will be used for the same purpose in this work.

Like nearly all religious and philosophical antiquities, the Bembine Table of Isis has been the subject of much controversy In a footnote, A. E. Waite—unable to differentiate between the true and the purported nature or origin of the Tablet —echoes the sentiments of J. G. Wilkinson, another eminent *exotericus:* "The

original [Table] is exceedingly late and is roughly termed a forgery." On the other hand, Eduard Winkelmann, a man of profound learning, defends the genuineness and antiquity of the Tablet. A sincere consideration of the *Mensa Isiaca* discloses one fact of paramount importance: that although whoever fashioned the Table was not necessarily an Egyptian, he was an initiate of the highest order conversant with the most arcane tenets of Hermetic esotericism.

Symbolism of the Bembine Table

The following necessarily brief elucidation of the Bembine Table is based upon a digest of the writings of Kircher supplemented by other information gleaned by the present author from the mystical writings of the Chaldeans, Hebrews, Egyptians, and Greeks. The temples of the Egyptians were so designed that the arrangement of chambers, decorations, and utensils was all of symbolic significance, as shown by the hieroglyphics that covered them. Beside the altar, which usually was in the center of each room, was the cistern of Nile water which flowed in and out through unseen pipes. Here also were images of the gods in concatenated series, accompanied by magical inscriptions. In these temples, by use of symbols and hieroglyphics, neophytes were instructed in the secrets of the sacerdotal caste.

The Tablet of Isis was originally a table or altar, and its emblems were part of the mysteries explained by priests. Tables were dedicated to the various gods and goddesses; in this case Isis was so honored. The substances from which the tables were made differed according to the relative dignities of the deities. The tables consecrated to Jupiter and Apollo were of gold; those to Diana, Venus, and Juno were of silver; those to the other superior gods, of marble; those to the lesser divinities, of wood. Tables were also made of metals corresponding to the planets governed by the various celestials. As food for the body is spread on a banquet table, so on these sacred altars were spread the symbols which, when understood, feed the invisible nature of man.

In his introduction to the Table, Kircher summarizes its symbolism thus: “It teaches, in the first place, the whole constitution of the threefold world—archetypal, intellectual, and sensible. The Supreme Divinity is shown moving from the center to the circumference of a universe made up of both sensible and inanimate things, all of which are animated and agitated by the one supreme power which they call the *Father Mind* and represented by a threefold symbol. Here also are shown three triads from the Supreme One, each manifesting one attribute of the first Trimurti. These triads are called the *Foundation*, or the base of all things. In the Table is also set forth the arrangement and distribution of

those divine creatures that aid the *Father Mind* in the control of the universe. Here [in the upper panel] are to be seen the Governors of the worlds, each with its fiery, ethereal, and material insignia. Here also [in the lower panel] are the *Fathers of Fountains,* whose duty it is to care for and preserve the principles of all things and sustain the inviolable laws of Nature. Here are the gods of the spheres and also those who wander from place to place, laboring with all substances and forms (Zonia and Azonia), grouped together as figures of both sexes, with their faces turned to their superior deity."

The *Mensa Isiaca,* which is divided horizontally into three chambers or panels, may represent the ground plan of the chambers in which the Isiac Mysteries were given. The center panel is divided into seven parts or lesser rooms, and the lower has two gates, one at each end. The entire Table contains forty-five figures of first importance and a number of lesser symbols. The forty-five main figures are grouped into fifteen triads, of which four are in the upper panel, seven in the central, and four in the lower. According to both Kircher and Levi, the triads are divided in the following manner:

IN THE UPPER SECTION

1. P,S,V—Mendesian Triad.
2. X, Z, A—Ammonian Triad.
3. B, C, D—Momphtæan Triad.
4. F, G, H—Omphtæan Triad.

IN THE CENTER SECTION

1. G, I, K—Isiac Triad.
2. L, M, N—Hecatine Triad.
3. O, Q, R—lbimorphous Triad.
4. V, S, W—Ophionic Triad.
5. X, Y, Z—Nephtæan Triad.
6. ζ, η, θ—Serapæan Triad.
7. γ, δ (not shown), ε—Osirian Triad.

IN THE LOWER SECTION

1. λ, M, N—Horæan Triad.
2. ξ, O, Σ—Pandochæan Triad.
3. T, Φ, X—Thaustic Triad.
4. Ψ, F, H—*Æ*luristic Triad.

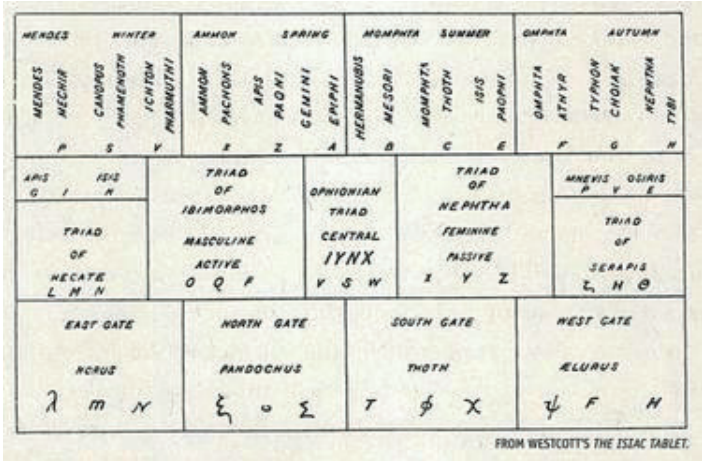
Of these fifteen triads Kircher writes: “The figures differ from each other in eight highly important respects, i.e., according to form, position, gesture, act, raiment, headdress, staff, and, lastly, according to the hieroglyphics placed around them, whether these be flowers, shrubs, small letters or animals.” These eight symbolic methods of portraying the secret powers of the figures are subtle reminders of the eight spiritual senses of cognition by means of which the Real Self in man may be comprehended. To express this spiritual truth the Buddhists used the wheel with eight spokes and raised their consciousness by means of the noble eightfold path. The ornamented border enclosing the three main panels of the Table contains many symbols consisting of birds, animals, reptiles, human beings, and composite forms. According to one reading of the Table, this border represents the four elements; the creatures are elemental beings. According to another interpretation, the border represents die archetypal spheres, and in its frieze of composite figures are the patterns of those forms which in various combinations will subsequently manifest themselves in the material world. The four flowers at the corners of the Table are those which, because their blossoms always face the sun and follow its course across the sky, are sacred emblems of that finer part of man’s nature which delights in facing its Creator.

According to the secret doctrine of the Chaldeans, the universe is divided into four states of being (planes or spheres): archetypal, intellectual, sidereal, and elemental. Each of these reveals the others; the superior controlling the inferior, and the inferior receiving influence from the superior. The archetypal plane was considered synonymous with the intellect of the Triune Divinity Within this divine, incorporeal, and eternal sphere are included all the lower manifestations of life—all that is, has been, or ever shall be. Within the Kosmic Intellect all things spiritual or material exist as archetypes, or divine thought-forms, which is shown in the Table by a chain of secret similes.

In the middle region of the Table appears the all-form-containing personified Spiritual Essence—the source and substance of all things. From this proceed the

lower worlds as nine emanations in groups of three (the Ophionic, Ibimorphous, and Nephtæan Triads). Consider in this connection the analogy of the Qabbalistic Sephiroth, or the nine spheres issuing from Kether, the Crown. The twelve Governors of the Universe (the Mendesian, Ammonian, Momphtæan, and Omphtæan Triads)—vehicles for the distribution of the creative influences, and shown in the upper region of the Table—are directed in their activities by the Divine Mind patterns existing in the archetypal sphere. The archetypes are abstract patterns formulated in the Divine Mind and by them all the inferior activities are controlled. In the lower region of the Table are the Father Fountains (the Horæan, Pandochæan, Thaustic, and Æluristic Triads), keepers of the great gates of the universe. These distribute to the lower worlds the influences descending from the Governors shown above.

In the theology of the Egyptians, goodness takes precedence and all things partake of its nature to a higher or lower degree. Goodness is sought by all. It is the Prime Cause of causes. Goodness is self-diffused and hence exists in all things, for nothing can produce that which it does not have in itself. The Table demonstrates that all is in God and God is in all; that all is in all and each is in each. In the intellectual world are invisible spiritual counterparts of the creatures which inhabit the elemental world. Therefore, the lowest exhibits the highest, the corporeal declares the intellectual, and the invisible is made manifest by its works. For this reason the Egyptians made images of substances existing in the inferior sensible world to serve as visible exemplars of superior and invisible powers. To the corruptible images they assigned the virtues of the incorruptible divinities, thus demonstrating arcanely that this world is but the shadow of God, the outward picture of the paradise within. All that is in the invisible archetypal sphere is revealed in the sensible corporeal world by the light of Nature.



FROM WESTCOTT'S *THE ISIAC TABLET.*

WESTCOTT'S KEY TO THE BEMBINE TABLE.

Zoroaster declared that the number three shines throughout the world. This is revealed in the Bembine Table by a series of triads representing the creative impulses. Of the Isiac Table, Atexandre Lenoir writes: "The Isiac Table, as a work of art, is not of great interest. It is but a composition, rather cold and insignificant, whose figures, summarily sketched and methodically placed near each other, give but little impression of life. But, if on the contrary, after examining it, we understand the purpose of the author, we become soon convinced that the Isiac Table is an image of the heavenly sphere divided in small parts to be used very likely for general teaching. According to that idea, we can conclude that the Isiac Table was originally the introduction to a collection followed by the Mysteries of Isis. It was engraved on copper in order to be used in the ceremonial of initiation." (See New Essay on the *Isiac Table.)*

The Archetypal and Creative Mind—first through its Paternal Foundation and afterwards through secondary Gods called Intelligences—poured out the whole infinity of its powers by continuous exchange from highest to lowest. In their phallic symbolism the Egyptians used the sperm to represent the spiritual spheres, because each contains all that comes forth from it. The Chaldeans and Egyptians also held that everything which is a result dwells in the cause of itself and turns to that cause as the lotus to the sun. Accordingly, the Supreme Intellect, through its Paternal Foundation, first created light—the angelic world. Out of that light were then created the invisible hierarchies of beings which some call the stars; and out of the stars the four elements and the sensible world were formed. Thus all are in all, after their respective kinds. All visible bodies or elements are in the invisible stars or spiritual elements, and the stars are likewise in those bodies; the stars are in the angels and the angels in the stars; the angels are in God and God is in all. Therefore, all are divinely in the Divine, angelically in the angels, and corporeally in the corporeal world, and vice versa. Just as the seed is the tree folded up, so the world is God unfolded.

Proclus says: "Every property of divinity permeates all creation and gives itself to all inferior creatures." One of the manifestations of the Supreme Mind is the power of reproduction according to species which it confers upon every creature of which it is the divine part. Thus souls, heavens, elements, animals, plants, and stones generate themselves each according to its pattern, but all are dependent upon the one fertilizing principle existing in the Supreme Mind. The

fecundative power, though of itself a unit, manifests differently through the various substances, for in the mineral it contributes to material existence, in the plant it manifests as vitality, and in the animal as sensibility It imparts motion to the heavenly bodies, thought to the souls of men, intellectuality to the angels, and superessentiality to God. Thus it is seen that all forms are of one substance and all life of one force, and these are co-existent in the nature of the Supreme One.

This doctrine was first expounded by Plato. His disciple, Aristotle, set it forth in these words: “We say that this Sensible World is an image of another; therefore since this world is vivid or alive, how much more, then, that other must live. * Yonder, therefore, above the stellar virtues, stand other heavens to be attained, like the heavens of this world; beyond them, because they are of a higher kind, brighter and vaster; nor are they distant from each other like this one, for they are incorporeal. Yonder, too, exists an earth, not of inanimate matter, but vivid with animal life and all natural terrestrial phenomena like this one, but of other kinds and perfections. There are plants, also, and gardens, and flowing water; there are aquatic animals but of nobler species. Yonder is air and life appropriate to it, all immortal. And although the life there is analogous to ours, yet it is nobler, seeing that it is intellectual, perpetual and unalterable. For if anyone should object and ask, How in the world above do the plants, *etc.* above mentioned find footing, we should answer that they do not have objective existence, for they were produced by the primal Author in an absolute condition and without exteriorization. They are, therefore, in the same case as intellect and soul; they suffer no defect such as waste and corruption, since the beings yonder are full of energy, strength and joy, as living in a life sublime and being the issue of one fount and of one quality, compounded of all like sweet savors, delicate perfumes, harmonious color and sound, and other perfections. Nor do they move violently about nor intermix nor corrupt each other, but each perfectly preserves its own essential character; and they are simple and do not multiply as corporeal beings do.”

In the midst of the Table is a great covered throne with a seated female figure representing Isis, but here called the Pantomorphic IYNX. G.R.S. Mead defines the IYNX as “a transmitting intelligence.” Others have declared it to be a symbol of Universal Being. Over the head of the goddess the throne is surmounted by a triple crown, and beneath her feet is the house of material substance. The threefold crown is here symbolic of the Triune Divinity, called by the Egyptians the Supreme Mind, and described in the *Sepher ha Zohar* as being “hidden and unrevealed.” According to the Hebrew system of Qabbalism, the Tree of the

Sephiroth was divided into two parts, the upper invisible and the lower visible. The upper consisted of three parts and the lower of seven. The three uncognizable Sephiroth were called *Kether,* the Crown; *Chochmah,* Wisdom; and *Binah,* Understanding. These are too abstract to permit of comprehension, whereas the lower seven spheres that came forth from them were within the grasp of human consciousness. The central panel contains seven triads of figures. These represent the lower Sephiroth, all emanating from the concealed threefold crown over the throne.

Kircher writes: “The throne denotes the diffusion of the triform Supreme Mind along the universal paths of the three worlds. Out of these three intangible spheres emerges the sensible universe, which Plutarch calls the ‘House of Horus’ and the Egyptians, the ‘Great Gate of the Gods.’ The top of the throne is in the midst of diffused serpent-shaped flames, indicating that the Supreme Mind is filled with light and life, eternal and incorruptible, removed from all material contact. How the Supreme Mind communicated His fire to all creatures is clearly set forth in the symbolism of the Table. The Divine Fire is communicated to lower spheres through the universal power of Nature personified by the World Virgin, Isis, here denominated the IYNX, or the polymorphous all-containing Universal Idea.” The word *Idea* is here used in its Platonic sense. “Plato believed that there are eternal forms of all possible things which exist without matter; and to these eternal and immaterial forms he gave the name of *ideas.* In the Platonic sense, *ideas* were the patterns according to which the Deity fashioned the phenomenal or ectypal world.” (Sir W. Hamilton.) Kircher describes the 21 figures in the central panel thus: “Seven principal triads, corresponding to seven superior worlds, are shown in the central section of the Table. They all originate from the fiery, invisible archetype [the triple crown of the throne]. The first, the Ophionic or IYNX Triad, V S W, corresponds to the vital and fiery world and is the first intellectual world, called by the ancients the *Aetherium.* Zoroaster says of it: ‘Oh, what rigorous rulers this world has!’ The second, or Ibimorphous Triad, O Q R, corresponds to the second intellectual, or ethereal, world, and is concerned with the principle of humidity. The third, or Nephtæan Triad, X Y Z, corresponds to the third intellectual and ethereal [world] and is concerned with fecundity These are the three triads of the ethereal worlds, which correspond to the Father Foundation. Then follow the four triads of the sensible, or material, worlds, of which the first two correspond to the sidereal worlds, GIKand γ δ e, namely, Osiris and Isis, Sun and Moon, indicated by two bulls. They are followed by two triads—the Hecatine, L M N,and the Serapæan, ζ η θ, corresponding to the sublunary and subterranean worlds. These complete the

seven worlds of primary Genii ruling the natural universe. Psellus quotes Zoroaster: ‘The Egyptians and the Chaldeans taught that there were seven corporeal worlds (i.e., worlds ruled by the intellectual powers); the first is of pure fire; the second, third, and fourth, ethereal; the fifth, six, and seventh, material; the seventh being the one called terrestrial and hater of light, and is located under the Moon, comprising within itself the matter called *fundus,* or foundation.’ These seven, plus the one invisible crown, constitute the eight worlds. *

“Plato writes that it is needful for the philosopher to know how the seven circles beneath the first one are arranged according to the Egyptians. The first triad of fire denotes life; the second, water, over which rule the Ibimorphous divinities; and the third, air, ruled by Nephta. From the fire the heavens were created, from the water the earth, and air was the mediator between them. In the Sephira Yetzirah it is said that from the three originate the seven, i. e., the height, the depth, the East, the West, the North, and the South, and the Holy Temple in the center sustaining them all. Is not the Holy Temple in the center the great throne of the many-formed Spirit of Nature which is shown in the middle of the Tablet? What are the seven triads but the seven Powers that rule over the world? Psellus writes: ‘The Egyptians worshipped the triad of faith, truth, and love; and the seven fountains: the Sun as ruler—the fountain of matter; then the fountain of the archangels; the fountain of the senses; of judgment; of lightning; of reflections; and of characters of unknown composition. They say that the highest material fountains are those of Apollo, Osiris, and Mercury—the fountains of the centers of the elements.’ Thus, they understood by the Sun as ruler the solar world; by the material archangelic, the lunar world; by the fountain of the senses, the world of Saturn; by judgment, Jupiter; by lightning, Mars; by that of the reflections, or mirrors, the world of Venus; by the fountain of characters, the world of Mercury. All these are shown by the figures in the center pane of the Tablet.”

The upper panel contains the twelve figures of the zodiac arranged in four triads. The center figure in each group represents one of the four fixed signs of the zodiac. S is the sign of Aquarius; *Z,* Taurus; *C,* Leo; and *G,* Scorpio. These are called the *Fathers.* In the secret teachings of the Far East these four figures—the man, the bull, the lion, and the eagle—are called the winged globes or the four Maharajahs who stand upon the corners of creation. The four cardinal signs—*P,* Capricorn; *X,* Aries; *B,* Cancer*; F,* Libra—are called the Powers. The four common signs—*V,* Pisces; *A,* Gemini; *E,* Virgo; *H,* Sagittarius—are called the *Minds* of the Four Lords. This explains the meaning of the winged globes of

Egypt, for the four central figures—Aquarius, Taurus, Leo, and Scorpio (called by Ezekiel the *Cherubim*)—are the globes; the cardinal and common signs on either side are the wings. Therefore the twelve signs of the zodiac may be symbolized by four globes, each with two wings.

The celestial triads are further shown by the Egyptians as a globe (the *Father)* from which issue a serpent (the *Mind)* and wings (the *Power).* These twelve forces are the fabricators of the world, and from them emanate the microcosm, or the mystery of the twelve sacred animals—representing in the universe the twelve parts of the world and in man the twelve parts of the human body. Anatomically, the twelve figures in the upper panel may well symbolize the twelve convolutions of the brain and the twelve figures in the lower panel the twelve zodiacal members and organs of the human body, for man is a creature formed of the twelve sacred animals with his members and organs under the direct control of the twelve governors or powers resident in the brain.

A more profound interpretation is found in the correspondences between the twelve figures in the upper panel and the twelve in the lower. This furnishes a key to one of the most arcane of ancient secrets—the relationship existing between the two great zodiacs—*the fixed* and the *movable. The fixed* zodiac is described as an immense dodecahedron, its twelve surfaces representing the outermost walls of abstract space. From each surface of this dodecahedron a great spiritual power, radiating inward, becomes embodied as one of the hierarchies of the *movable* zodiac, which is a band of circumambulating so-called fixed stars. Within this *movable* zodiac are posited the various planetary and elemental bodies. The relation of these two zodiacs to the subzodiacal spheres has a correlation in the respiratory system of the human body. The great *fixed* zodiac may be said to represent the atmosphere, the *movable* zodiac the lungs, and the subzodiacal worlds the body. The spiritual atmosphere containing the vivifying energies of the twelve divine powers of the great *fixed* zodiac is inhaled by the cosmic lungs—the *movable* zodiac—and distributed by them through the constitution of the twelve holy animals which are the parts and members of the material universe. The functional cycle is completed when the poisonous effluvia of the lower worlds collected by the *movable* zodiac are exhaled into the great *fixed* zodiac, there to be purified by being passed through the divine natures of its twelve eternal hierarchies.

The Table as a whole is susceptible of many interpretations. If the border of the Table with its hieroglyphic figures be accepted as the spiritual source, then the throne in the center represents the physical body within which human nature

is enthroned. From this point of view the entire Table becomes emblematic of the auric bodies of man, with the border as the outer extremity or shell of the *auric* egg. If the throne be accepted as the symbol of the spiritual sphere, the border typifies the elements, and the various panels surrounding the central one become emblematic of the worlds or planes emanating from the one divine source. If the Table be considered from a purely physical basis, the throne becomes symbolic of the generative system and the Table reveals the secret processes of embryology as applied to the formation of the material worlds. If a purely physiological and anatomical interpretation be desired, the central throne becomes the heart, the Ibimorphous Triad the mind, the Nephtæan Triad the generative system, and the surrounding hieroglyphics the various parts and members of the human body. From the evolutionary viewpoint the central gate becomes the point of both entrance and exit. Here also is set forth the process of initiation, in which the candidate after passing successfully through the various ordeals is finally brought into the presence of his own soul, which he alone is capable of unveiling.

If cosmogony be the subject of consideration, the central panel represents the spiritual worlds, the upper panel the intellectual worlds, and the lower panel the material worlds. The central panel may also symbolize the nine invisible worlds, and the creature marked *T* the physical nature—the footstool of Isis, the Spirit of Universal Life. Considered in the light of alchemy, the central panel contains the metals and the borders the alchemical processes. The figure seated on the throne is the Universal Mercury—the “stone of the wise”; the flaming canopy of the throne above is the Divine Sulphur; and the cube of earth beneath is the elemental salt.

The three triads—or the *Paternal Foundation*—in the central panel represent the Silent Watchers, the three invisible parts of the nature of man; the two panels on either side are the quaternary lower nature of man. In the central panel are 21 figures. This number is sacred to the sun—which consists of three great powers, each with seven attributes—and by Qabbalistic reduction 21 becomes 3, or the Great Triad.

It will yet be proved that the Table of Isis is directly connected with Egyptian Gnosticism, for in a Gnostic papyrus preserved in the Bodleian Library there is a direct reference to the twelve *Fathers* or *Paternities* beneath whom are twelve Fountains. (See *Egyptian Magic* by S.S.D.D.) That the lower panel represents the underworld is further emphasized by the two gates—the great gate of the East and the great gate of the West—for in the Chaldean theology the sun rises

and sets through gates in the underworld, where it wanders during the hours of darkness. As Plato was for thirteen years under the instruction of the Magi Patheneith, Ochoaps, Sechtnouphis, and Etymon of Sebbennithis, his philosophy consequently is permeated with the Chaldean and Egyptian system of triads. The Bembine Table is a diagrammatic exposition of the so-called Platonic philosophy, for in its design is epitomized the entire theory of mystic cosmogony and generation. The most valuable guide to the interpretation of this Table is the *Commentaries of Proclus on the Theology of Plato.* The *Chaldean Oracles of Zaroaster* also contains many allusions to the theogonic principles which are demonstrated by the Table.

The *Theogony* of Hesiod contains the most complete account of the Greek cosmogony myth. Orphic cosmogony has left its impress upon the various forms of philosophy and religion—Greek,Egyptian, and Syrian—which it contacted. Chief of the Orphic symbols was the *mundane egg* from which Phanes sprang into light. Thomas Taylor considers the Orphic egg to be synonymous with the *mixture* from *bound* and *infinity* mentioned by Plato in the *Philebus.* The egg is furthermore the third Intelligible Triad and the proper symbol of the Demiurgus, whose auric body is the egg of the inferior universe.

Eusebius, on the authority of Porphyry, declared that the Egyptians acknowledged one intellectual Author or Creator of the world under the name of *Cneph* and that they worshiped him in a statue of human form and dark blue complexion, holding in his hand a girdle and a scepter, wearing on his head a royal plume, and thrusting forth an egg out of his mouth. (See *An Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology.)* While the Bembine Table is rectangular-shaped, it signifies philosophically the Orphic egg of the universe with its contents. In the esoteric doctrines the supreme individual achievement is the breaking of the Orphic egg, which is equivalent to the return of the spirit to the Nirvana—the *absolute* condition—of the Oriental mystics.

The New Pantheon by Samuel Boyse contains three plates showing various sections of the Bembine Table. The author, however, makes no important contribution to the knowledge of the subject. In *The Mythology and Fables of the Ancients Explained from History,* the Abbé Banier devotes a chapter to a consideration of the *Mensa Isiaca.* After reviewing the conclusions of Montfaucon, Kircher, and Pignorius, he adds: “I am of the opinion that it was a votive table, which some prince or private person had consecrated to Isis, as an acknowledgment for some benefit which he believed she had conferred upon him.”

XII

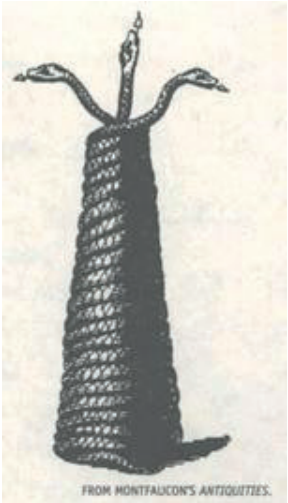
Wonders of Antiquity

It was a common practice among the early Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans to seal lighted lamps in the sepulchers of their dead as offerings to the God of Death. Possibly it was also believed that the deceased could use these lights in finding his way through the Valley of the Shadow. Later as the custom became generally established, not only actual lamps but miniatures of them in terra cotta were buried with the dead. Some of the lamps were enclosed in circular vessels for protection; and instances have been recorded in which the original oil was found in them, in a perfect state of preservation, after more than 2,000 years. There is ample proof that many of these lamps were burning when the sepulchers were sealed, and it has been declared that they were still burning when the vaults were opened hundreds of years later. The possibility of preparing a fuel which would renew itself as rapidly as it was consumed has been a source of considerable controversy among mediaeval authors. After due consideration of the evidence at hand, it seems well within the range of possibility that the ancient priest-chemists did manufacture lamps that burned, if not indefinitely, at least for considerable periods of time.

Numerous authorities have written on the subject of everburning lamps. W. Wynn Westcott estimates the number of writers who have given the subject consideration as more than 150, and H. P. Blavatsky as 173. While conclusions reached by different authors are at variance, a majority admit the existence of these phenomenal lamps. Only a few maintained that the lamps would burn forever, but many were willing to concede that they might remain alight for several centuries without replenishment of the fuel. Some considered the so-called perpetual lights as mere artifices of the crafty pagan priests, while a great many, admitting that the lamps actually burned, made the sweeping assertion that the Devil was using this apparent miracle to ensnare the credulous and thereby lead their souls to perdition.

On this subject the learned Jesuit, Athanasius Kircher, usually dependable, exhibits a striking inconsistency. *In his* Œ*dipus Ægyptiacus he writes: "Not a* few of these everburning lamps have been found to be the devices of devils, * And I take it that all the lamps found in the tombs of the Gentiles dedicated to the worship of certain gods, were of this kind, not because they burned, or have been reported to burn, with a perpetual flame, but because probably the devil set them there, maliciously intending thereby to obtain fresh credence for a false worship."

Having admitted that dependable authorities defend the existence of the everburning lamps, and that even the Devil lends himself to their manufacture, Kircher next declared the entire theory to be desperate and impossible, and to be classed with perpetual motion and the Philosopher's Stone. Having already solved the problem to his satisfaction once, Kircher solves it again—but differently—in the following words: "In Egypt there are rich deposits of asphalt and petroleum. What did those clever fellows [the priests] do, then, but connect an oil deposit by a secret duct with one or more lamps, provided with wicks of abestos! How could such lamps help burning perpetually? * In my opinion this is the solution of the riddle of the supernatural everlastingness of these ancient lamps."



FROM MONTFAUCON'S *ANTIQUITIES.*

BASE OF A DELPHIAN TRIPOD.

The windings of these serpents formed the base, and the three heads sustained the three feet of the tripod. It is impossible to secure satisfactory information concerning the shape and size of the celebrated Delphian tripod. Theories

concerning it are based (in most part) upon small ornamental tripods discovered in various temples.

Montfaucon, in his *Antiquities,* agrees in the main with the later deductions of Kircher, believing the fabled perpetual lamps of the temples to be cunning mechanical contrivances. He further adds that the belief that lamps burned indefinitely in tombs was the result of the noteworthy fact that in some cases fumes resembling smoke poured forth from the entrances of newly opened vaults. Parties going in later and discovering lamps scattered about the floor assumed that they were the source of the fumes.

There are several interesting stories concerning the discoveries of everburning lamps in various parts of the world. In a tomb on the Appian Way which was opened during the papacy of Paul III was found a burning lamp which had remained alight in a hermetically sealed vault for nearly 1,600 years. According to an account written by a contemporary, a body—that of a young and beautiful girl with long golden hair—was found floating in an unknown transparent liquid and as well preserved as though death had occurred but a few hours before. About the interior of the vault were a number of significant objects, which included several lamps, one of them alight. Those entering the sepulcher declared that the draft caused by the opening of the door blew out the light and the lamp could not be relighted. Kircher reproduces an epitaph, “TULLI-OLAE FILIAE MEAE,” supposedly found in the tomb, but which Montfaucon declares never existed, the latter adding that although conclusive evidence was not found, the body was generally believed to be that of Tulliola, the daughter of Cicero.

Everburning lamps have been discovered in all parts of the world. Not only the Mediterranean countries but also India, Tibet, China, and South America have contributed records of lights which burned continuously without fuel. The examples which follow were selected at random from the imposing list of perpetual lamps found in different ages.

Plutarch wrote of a lamp that burned over the door of a temple to Jupiter Ammon; the priests declared that it had remained alight for centuries without fuel.

St. Augustine described a perpetual lamp, guarded in a temple in Egypt sacred to Venus, which neither wind nor water could extinguish. He believed it to be the work of the Devil.

An everburning lamp was found at Edessa, or Antioch, during the reign of the Emperor Justinian. It was in a niche over the city gate, elaborately enclosed to

protect it from the elements. The date upon it proved that the lamp had been burning for more than 500 years. It was destroyed by soldiers.

During the early Middle Ages a lamp was found in England which had burned since the third century after Christ. The monument containing it was believed to be the tomb of the father of Constantine the Great.

The Lantern of Pallas was discovered near Rome in A.D. 1401. It was found in the sepulcher of Pallas, Son of Evander, immortalized by Virgil in his *Æneid.* The lamp was placed at the head of the body and had burned with a steady glow for more than 2,000 years.

In A.D. 1550 on the island of Nesis, in the Bay of Naples, a magnificent marble vault was opened in which was found a lamp still alight which had been placed there before the beginning of the Christian Era.

Pausanias described a beautiful golden lamp in the temple of Minerva which burned steadily for a year without refueling or having the wick trimmed. The ceremony of filling the lamp took place annually, and time was measured by the ceremony.

According to the *Fama Fraternitatis,* the crypt of Christian Rosencreutz when opened 120 years after his death was found to be brilliantly illuminated by a perpetual lamp suspended from the ceiling.

Numa Pompilius, King of Rome and magician of considerable power, caused a perpetual light to burn in the dome of a temple he had created in honor of an elemental being.

In England a curious tomb was found containing an automaton which moved when certain stones in the floor of the vault were stepped upon by an intruder. At that time the Rosicrucian controversy was at its height, so it was decided that the tomb was that of a Rosicrucian initiate. A countryman, discovering the tomb and entering, found the interior brilliantly lighted by a lamp hanging from the ceiling. As he walked, his weight depressed some of the floor stones. At once a seated figure in heavy armor began to move. Mechanically it rose to its feet and struck the lamp with an iron baton, completely destroying it, and thus effectually preventing the discovery of the secret substance which maintained the flame. How long the lamp had burned is unknown, but certainly it had been for a considerable number of years.

It is related that among the tombs near Memphis and in the Brahmin temples of India lights have been found in sealed chambers and vessels, but sudden

exposure to the air has extinguished them and caused their fuel to evaporate.

It is now believed that the wicks of these perpetual lamps were made of braided or woven asbestos, called by the alchemists salamander's wool, and that the fuel was one of the products of alchemical research. Kircher attempted to extract oil from asbestos, being convinced that as the substance itself was indestructible by fire an oil extracted from it would supply the lamp with a fuel likewise indestructible. After spending two years in fruitless experimental work, he concluded that the task was impossible of accomplishment.

Several formulae for the making of the fuel for the lamps have been preserved. In *Isis Unveiled,* H. P. Blavatsky reprints two of these formulæ from early authors—Tritenheim and Bartolomeo Korndorf. One will suffice to give a general understanding of the process:

"*Sulphur. Alum* ust. a 3 iv.; sublime them into flowers to 3 ij., of which add of crystalline Venetian borax (powdered) 3 j.; upon these affuse high rectified spirit of wine and digest it, then abstract it and pour on fresh; repeat this so often till the sulphur melts like wax without any smoke, upon a hot plate of brass: this is for the *pabulum,* but the wick is to be prepared after this manner: gather the threads or thrums of the *Lapis asbestos,* to the thickness of your middle and the length of your little finger, then put them into a Venetian glass, and covering them over with the aforesaid depurated sulphur or aliment set the glass in sand for the space of twenty-four hours, so hot that the sulphur may bubble all the while. The wick being thus besmeared and anointed, is to be put into a glass like a scallop-shell, in such manner that some part of it may lie above the mass of prepared sulphur; then setting this glass upon hot sand, you must melt the sulphur, so that it may lay hold of the wick, and when it is lighted, it will burn with a perpetual flame and you may set this lamp in any place where you please."

The Greek Oracles

The worship of Apollo included the establishment and maintenance of places of prophecy by means of which the gods could communicate with mankind and reveal futurity to such as deserved the boon. The early history of Greece abounds with accounts of talking trees, rivers, statues, and caves in which nymphs, dryads, or dæmons had taken up their abodes and from which they delivered oracles. While Christian authors have tried to prove that oracular revelations were delivered by the Devil for the purpose of misleading humanity, they have not dared to attack the theory of oracles, because of the repeated reference to it in their own sacred writings. If the onyx stones on the shoulders of Israel's high priest made known by their flashings the will of Jehovah, then a black dove, temporarily endowed with the faculty of speech, could indeed pronounce oracles in the temple of Jupiter Ammon. If the witch of Endor could invoke the shade of Samuel, who in turn gave prophecies to Saul, could not a priestess of Apollo call up the specter of her leige to foretell the destiny of Greece?

The most famous oracles of antiquity were those of Delphi, Dodona, Trophonius, and Latona, of which the talking oak trees of Dodona were the oldest. Though it is impossible to trace back to the genesis of the theory of oracular prophecy, it is known that many of the caves and fissures set aside by the Greeks as oracles were sacred long before the rise of Greek culture.

The oracle of Apollo at Delphi remains one of the unsolved mysteries of the ancients. Alexander Wilder derives the name *Delphi* from *delphos,* the womb. This name was chosen by the Greeks because of the shape of the cavern and the vent leading into the depths of the earth. The original name of the oracle was *Pytho,* so called because its chambers had been the abode of the great serpent *Python,* a fearsome creature that had crept out of the slime left by the receding flood that had destroyed all human beings except Deucalion and Pyrrha. Apollo, climbing the side of Mount Parnassus, slew the serpent after a prolonged combat, and threw the body down the fissure of the oracle. From that time the Sun God, surnamed the Pythian Apollo, gave oracles from the vent. With Dionysos he shared the honor of being the patron god of Delphi.

After being vanquished by Apollo, the spirit of Python remained at Delphi as the representative of his conqueror, and it was with the aid of his effluvium that the priestess was able to become *en rapport* with the god. The fumes rising from the fissure of the oracle were supposed to come from the decaying body of Python. The name *Pythoness,* or *Pythia,* given to the female hierophant of the oracle, means literally one who has been thrown into a religious frenzy by inhaling fumes rising from decomposing matter. It is of further interest to note that the Greeks believed the oracle of Delphi to be the umbilicus of the earth, thus proving that they considered the planet an immense human being. The connection between the principle of oracular revelation and the occult significance of the navel is an important secret belonging to the ancient Mysteries.

The oracle, however, is much older than the foregoing account indicates. A story of this kind was probably invented by the priests to explain the phenomena to those inquisitive persons whom they did not consider worthy of enlightenment regarding the true esoteric nature of the oracle. Some believe that the Delphic fissure was discovered by a Hypoborean priest, but as far back as recorded history goes the cave was sacred, and persons came from all parts of Greece and the surrounding countries to question the dæmon who dwelt in its chimney-like vent. Priests and priestesses guarded it closely and served the spirit who dwelt therein and who enlightened humanity through the gift of prophecy.

The story of the original discovery of the oracle is somewhat as follows: Shepherds tending their flocks on the side of Mount Parnassus were amazed at the peculiar antics of goats that wandered close to a great chasm on its southwestern spur. The animals jumped about as though trying to dance, and emitted strange cries unlike anything before heard. At last one of the shepherds, curious to learn the cause of the phenomenon, approached the vent, from which were rising noxious fumes. Immediately he was seized with a prophetic ecstasy; he danced with wild abandon, sang, jabbered inarticulate sounds, and foretold future events. Others went close to the fissure, with the same result. The fame of the place spread, and many came to learn of the future by inhaling the mephitic fumes, which exhilarated to the verge of delirium.

Some of those who came, being unable to control themselves, and having temporarily the strength of madmen, tore themselves from those seeking to restrain them, and, jumping into the vent, perished. In order to prevent others from doing likewise, a wall was erected around the fissure and a prophetess was appointed to act as mediator between the oracle and those who came to question

it. According to later authorities, a tripod of gold, ornamented with carvings of Apollo in the form of Python, the great serpent, was placed over the cleft, and on this was arranged a specially prepared seat, so constructed that a person would have difficulty in falling off while under the influence of the oracular fumes. Just before this time, a story had been circulated that the fumes of the oracle arose from the decaying body of Python. It is possible that the oracle revealed its own origin.

For many centuries during its early history, virgin maidens were consecrated to the service of the oracle. They were called the *Phœbades*, or *Pythiæ*, and constituted that famous order now known as the Pythian priesthood. It is probable that women were chosen to receive the oracles because their sensitive and emotional nature responded more quickly and completely to “the fumes of enthusiasm.” Three days before the time set to receive the communications from Apollo, the virgin priestess began the ceremony of purification. She bathed in the Castalian well, abstained from all food, drank only from the fountain of Cassotis, which was brought into the temple through concealed pipes, and just before mounting the tripod, she chewed a few leaves of the sacred bay tree. It has been said that the water was drugged to bring on distorted visions, or the priests of Delphi were able to manufacture an exhilarating and intoxicating gas, which they conducted by subterranean ducts and released into the shaft of the oracle several feet below the surface. Neither of these theories has been proved, however, nor does either in any way explain the accuracy of the predictions.

When the young prophetess had completed the process of purification, she was clothed in sanctified raiment and led to the tripod, upon which she seated herself, surrounded by the noxious vapors rising from the yawning fissure. Gradually, as she inhaled the fumes, a change came over her. It was as if a different spirit had entered her body. She struggled, tore her clothing, and uttered inarticulate cries. After a time her struggles ceased. Upon becoming calm a great majesty seemed to possess her, and with eyes fixed on space and body rigid, she uttered the prophetic words. The predictions were usually in the form of hexameter verse, but the words were often ambiguous and sometimes unintelligible. Every sound that she made, every motion of her body, was carefully recorded by the five Hosii, or holy men, who were appointed as scribes to preserve the minutest details of each divination. The Hosii were appointed for life, and were chosen from the direct descendants of Deucalion.

After the oracle was delivered, the Pythia began to struggle again, and the spirit released her. She was then carried or supported to a chamber of rest, where

she remained till the nervous ecstasy had passed away.

Iamblichus, in his dissertation on *The Mysteries,* describes how the spirit of the oracle—a fiery dæmon, even Apollo himself—took control of the Pythoness and manifested through her: “But the prophetess in Delphi, whether she gives oracles to mankind through an attenuated and fiery spirit, bursting from the mouth of the cavern; or whether being seated in the adytum on a brazen tripod, or on a stool with four feet, she becomes sacred to the God; whichsoever of these is the case, she entirely gives herself up to a divine spirit, and is illuminated with a ray of divine fire. And when, indeed, fire ascending from the mouth of the cavern circularly invests her in collected abundance, she becomes filled from it with a divine splendour. But when she places herself on the seat of the God, she becomes coadapted to his stable prophetic power: and from both of these preparatory operations she becomes wholly possessed by the God. And then, indeed, he is present with and illuminates her in a separate manner, and is different from the fire, the spirit, the proper seat, and, in short, from all the visible apparatus of the place, whether physical or sacred.”

Among the celebrities who visited the oracle of Delphi were the immortal Apollonius of Tyana and his disciple Damis. He made his offerings and, after being crowned with a laurel wreath and given a branch of the same plant to carry in his hand, he passed behind the statue of Apollo which stood before the entrance to the cave, and descended into the sacred place of the oracle. The priestess was also crowned with laurel and her head bound with a band of white wool. Apollonius asked the oracle if his name would be remembered by future generations. The Pythoness answered in the affirmative, but declared that it would always be calumniated. Apollonius left the cavern in anger, but time has proved the accuracy of the prediction, for the early church fathers perpetuated the name of Apollonius as the Antichrist. (For details of the story see *Histoire de la Magie.)*

The messages given by the virgin prophetess were turned over to the philosophers of the oracle, whose duty it was to interpret and apply them. The communications were then delivered to the poets, who immediately translated them into odes and lyrics, setting forth in exquisite form the statements supposedly made by Apollo and making them available for the populace.

Serpents were much in evidence at the oracle of Delphi. The base of the tripod upon which the Pythia sat was formed of the twisted bodies of three gigantic snakes. According to some authorities, one of the processes used to produce the prophetic ecstasy was to force the young priestess to gaze into the eyes of a

serpent. Fascinated and hypnotized, she then spoke with the voice of the god.

Although the early Pythian priestesses were always maidens—some still in their teens—a law was later enacted that only women past fifty years of age should be the mouthpiece of the oracle. These older women dressed as young girls and went through the same ceremonial as the first Pythiae. The change was probably the indirect result of a series of assaults made upon the persons of the priestesses by the profane.

During the early history of the Delphian oracle the god spoke only at each seventh birthday of Apollo. As time went on, however, the demand became so great that the Pythia was forced to seat herself upon the tripod every month. The times selected for the consultation and the questions to be asked were determined by lot or by vote of the inhabitants of Delphi.

It is generally admitted that the effect of the Delphian oracle upon Greek culture was profoundly constructive. James Gardner sums up its influence in the following words: “Its responses revealed many a tyrant and foretold his fate. Through its means many an unhappy being was saved from destruction and many a perplexed mortal guided in the right way. It encouraged useful institutions, and promoted the progress of useful discoveries. Its moral influence was on the side of virtue, and its political influence in favor of the advancement of civil liberty.” (See *The Faiths of The World.*)

The oracle of Dodona was presided over by Jupiter, who uttered prophecies through oak trees, birds, and vases of brass. Many writers have noted the similarities between the rituals of Dodona and those of the Druid priests of Britain and Gaul. The famous oracular dove of Dodona, alighting upon the branches of the sacred oaks, not only discoursed at length in the Greek tongue upon philosophy and religion, but also answered the queries of those who came from distant places to consult it.

The “talking” trees stood together, forming a sacred grove. When the priests desired answers to important questions, after careful and solemn purifications they retired to the grove. They then accosted the trees, beseeching a reply from the god who dwelt therein. When they had stated their questions, the trees spoke with the voices of human beings, revealing to the priests the desired information. Some assert that there was but one tree which spoke—an oak or a beech standing in the very heart of the ancient grove. Because Jupiter was believed to inhabit this tree he was sometimes called *Phegonæus,* or one who lives in a beech tree.

Most curious of the oracles of Dodona were the “talking” vases, or kettles.

These were made of brass and so carefully fashioned that when struck they gave off sound for hours. Some writers have described a row of these vases and have declared that if one of them was struck its vibrations would be communicated to all the others and a terrifying din ensue. Other authors describe a large single vase, standing upon a pillar, near which stood another column, supporting the statue of a child holding a whip. At the end of the whip were a number of swinging cords tipped with small metal balls, and the wind, which blew incessantly through the open building, caused the balls to strike against the vase. The number and intensity of the impacts and the reverberations of the vase were all carefully noted, and the priests delivered their oracles accordingly.

When the original priests of Dodona—the *Selloi*—mysteriously vanished, the oracle was served for many centuries by three priestesses who interpreted the vases and at midnight interrogated the sacred trees. The patrons of the oracles were expected to bring offerings and to make contributions.

Another remarkable oracle was the Cave of Trophonius, which stood upon the side of a hill with an entrance so small that it seemed impossible for a human being to enter. After the consultant had made his offering at the statue of Trophonius and had donned the sanctified garments, he climbed the hill to the cave, carrying in one hand a cake of honey. Sitting down at the edge of the opening, he lowered his feet into the cavern. Thereupon his entire body was precipitately drawn into the cave, which was described by those who had entered it as having only the dimensions of a fair-sized oven. When the oracle had completed its revelation, the consultant, usually delirious, was forcibly ejected from the cave, feet foremost.

Near the cave of the oracle two fountains bubbled out of the earth within a few feet of each other. Those about to enter the cave drank first from these fountains, the waters of which seemed to possess peculiar occult properties. The first contained the water of forgetfulness, and all who drank thereof forgot their earthly sorrows. From the second fountain flowed the sacred water of Mnemosyne, or remembrance, for later it enabled those who partook of it to recall their experiences while in the cave.

Though its entrance was marked by two brass obelisks, the cave, surrounded by a wall of white stones and concealed in the heart of a grove of sacred trees, did not present an imposing appearance. There is no doubt that those entering it passed through strange experiences, for they were obliged to leave at the adjacent temple a complete account of what they saw and heard while in the oracle. The prophecies were given in the form of dreams and visions, and were

accompanied by severe pains in the head; some never completely recovered from the after effects of their delirium. The confused recital of their experiences was interpreted by the priests according to the question to be answered. While the priests probably used some unknown herb to produce the dreams or visions of the cavern, their skill in interpreting them bordered on the supernatural. Before consulting the oracle, it was necessary to offer a ram to the daemon of the cave, and the priest decided by hieromancy whether the time chosen was propitious and the sacrifice was satisfactory.

The Seven Wonders of the World

Many of the sculptors and architects of the ancient world were initiates of the Mysteries, particularly the Eleusinian rites. Since the dawn of time, the truers of stone and the hewers of wood have constituted a divinely overshadowed caste. As civilization spread slowly over the earth, cities were built and deserted; monuments were erected to heroes at present unknown; temples were built to gods who lie broken in the dust of the nations they inspired. Research has proved not only that the builders of these cities and monuments and the sculptors who chiseled out the inscrutable faces of the gods were masters of their crafts, but that in the world today there are none to equal them. The profound knowledge of mathematics and astronomy embodied in ancient architecture, and the equally profound knowledge of anatomy revealed in Greek statuary, prove that the fashioners of both were master minds, deeply cultured in the wisdom which constituted the arcana of the Mysteries. Thus was established the Guild of the Builders, progenitors of modern Freemasons. When employed to build palaces, temples or tombs, or to carve statues for the wealthy, those initiated architects and artists concealed in their works the secret doctrine, so that now, long after their bones have returned to dust, the world realizes that those first artisans were indeed duly initiated and worthy to receive the wages of Master Masons.

The Seven Wonders of the World, while apparently designed for diverse reasons, were really monuments erected to perpetuate the arcana of the Mysteries. They were symbolic structures, placed in peculiar spots, and the real purpose of their erection can be sensed only by the initiated. Eliphas Levi has noted the marked correspondence between these Seven Wonders and the seven planets. The Seven Wonders of the World were built by Widow’s sons in honor of the seven planetary genii. Their secret symbolism is identical with that of the seven seals of Revelation and the seven churches of Asia.

1. The Colossus of Rhodes, a gigantic brass statue about 109 feet in height and requiring over twelve years to build, was the work of an initiated artist, Charles of Lindus. The popular theory—accepted for several hundred years—that the figure stood with one foot on each side of the

entrance to the harbor of Rhodes and that full-rigged ships passed between its feet, has never been substantiated. Unfortunately, the figure remained standing but fifty-six years, being thrown down by an earthquake in 224 B.C. The shattered parts of the Colossus lay scattered about the ground for more than 900 years, when they were finally sold to a Jewish merchant, who carried the metal away on the backs of 700 camels. Some believed that the brass was converted into munitions and others that it was made into drainage pipes. This gigantic gilded figure, with its crown of solar rays and its upraised torch, signified occultly the glorious Sun Man of the Mysteries, the Universal Savior.

2. The architect Ctesiphon, in the fifth century B.C., submitted to the Ionian cities a plan for erecting a joint monument to their patron goddess, Diana. The place chosen was Ephesus, a city south of Smyrna. The building was constructed of marble. The roof was supported by 127 columns, each 60 feet high and weighing over 150 tons. The temple was destroyed by black magic about 356 B.C., but the world fixes the odious crime upon the tool by means of which the destruction was accomplished—a mentally deranged man named Herostratus. It was later rebuilt, but the symbolism was lost. The original temple, designed as a miniature of the universe, was dedicated to the moon, the occult symbol of generation.

3. Upon his exile from Athens, Phidias—the greatest of all the Greek sculptors—went to Olympia in the province of Elis and there designed his colossal statue of Zeus, chief of the gods of Greece. There is not even an accurate description of this masterpiece now in existence; only a few old coins give an inadequate idea of its general appearance. The body of the god was overlaid with ivory and the robes were of beaten gold. In one hand he is supposed to have held a globe supporting a figure of the Goddess of Victory, in the other a scepter surmounted by an eagle. The head of Zeus was archaic, heavily bearded, and crowned with an olive wreath. The statue was seated upon an elaborately decorated throne. As its name implies, the monument was dedicated to the spirit of the planet Jupiter, one of the seven Logi who bow before the Lord of the Sun.

4. Eliphas Levi includes the Temple of Solomon among the Seven Wonders of the World, giving it the place occupied by the Pharos, or Lighthouse, of Alexandria. The Pharos, named for the island upon which it stood, was designed and constructed by Sostratus of Cnidus during the reign of Ptolemy (283—247 B.C.). It is described as being of white marble and

over 600 feet high. Even in that ancient day it cost nearly a million dollars. Fires were lighted in the top of it and could be seen for miles out at sea. It was destroyed by an earthquake in the thirteenth century, but remains of it were visible until A.D. 1350. Being the tallest of all the Wonders, it was naturally assigned to Saturn, the Father of the gods and the true illuminator of all humanity.

5. The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus was a magnificent monument erected by Queen Artemisia in memory of her dead husband, King Mausolus, from whose name the word *mausoleum* is derived. The designers of the building were Satyrus and Pythis, and four great sculptors were employed to ornament the edifice. The building, which was 114 feet long and 92 feet wide, was divided into five major sections (the senses) and surmounted by a pyramid (the spiritual nature of man). The pyramid rose in 24 steps (a sacred number), and upon the apex was a statue of King Mausolus in a chariot. His figure was 9 feet 9½ inches tall. Many attempts have been made to reconstruct the monument, which was destroyed by an earthquake, but none has been altogether successful. This monument was sacred to the planet Mars and was built by an initiate for the enlightenment of the world.

6. The Gardens of Semiramis at Babylon—more commonly known as the Hanging Gardens—stood within the palace grounds of Nebuchadnezzar, near the Euphrates River. They rose in a terrace-like pyramid and on the top was a reservoir for the watering of the gardens. They were built about 600 B.C., but the name of the landscape artist has not been preserved. They symbolized the planes of the invisible world, and were consecrated to Venus as the goddess of love and beauty.

7. The Great Pyramid was supreme among the temples of the Mysteries. In order to be true to its astronomical symbolism, it must have been constructed about 70,000 years ago. It was the tomb of Osiris, and was believed to have been built by the gods themselves, and the architect may have been the immortal Hermes. It is the monument of Mercury, the messenger of the gods, and the universal symbol of wisdom and letters.

XIII

The Life and Philosophy of Pythagoras

Thile hile Mnesarchus, the father of Pythagoras, was in the city of Delphi on matters pertaining to his business as a merchant, he and his wife, Parthenis, decided to consult the oracle of Delphi as to whether the Fates were favorable for their return voyage to Syria. When the Pythoness (prophetess of Apollo) seated herself on the golden tripod over the yawning vent of the oracle, she did not answer the question they had asked, but told Mnesarchus that his wife was then with child and would give birth to a son who was destined to surpass all men in beauty and wisdom, and who throughout the course of his life would contribute much to the benefit of mankind. Mnesarchus was so deeply impressed by the prophecy that he changed his wife's name to Pythasis, in honor of the Pythian priestess. When the child was born at Sidon in Phœnicia, it was—as the oracle had said—a son. Mnesarchus and Pythasis named the child Pythagoras, for they believed that he had been predestined by the oracle.

Many strange legends have been preserved concerning the birth of Pythagoras. Some maintained that he was no mortal man: that he was one of the gods who had taken a human body to enable him to come into the world and instruct the human race. Pythagoras was one of the many sages and saviors of antiquity for whom an immaculate conception is asserted. In his *Anacalypsis*, Godfrey Higgins writes: "The first striking circumstance in which the history of Pythagoras agrees with the history of Jesus is, that they were natives of nearly the same country; the former being born at Sidon, the latter at Bethlehem, both in Syria. The father of Pythagoras, as well as the father of Jesus, was prophetically informed that his wife should bring forth a son, who should be a benefactor to mankind. They were both born when their mothers were from home on journeys, Joseph and his wife having gone up to Bethlehem to be taxed, and the father of Pythagoras having travelled from Samos, his residence, to Sidon, about his mercantile concerns. Pythais [Pythasis], the mother of

Pythagoras, had a connexion with an Apolloniacal spectre, or ghost, of the God Apollo, or God Sol, (of course this must have been a *holy* ghost, and here we have the Holy Ghost) which afterward appeared to her husband, and told him that he must have no connexion with his wife during her pregnancy—a story evidently the same as that relating to Joseph and Mary. From these peculiar circumstances, Pythagoras was known by the same title as Jesus, namely, the *son of God;* and was supposed by the multitude to be under the influence of Divine inspiration."

This most famous philosopher was born sometime between 600 and 590 B.C., and the length of his life has been estimated at nearly one hundred years.

The teachings of Pythagoras indicate that he was thoroughly conversant with the precepts of Oriental and Occidental esotericism. He traveled among the Jews and was instructed by the Rabbins concerning the secret traditions of Moses, the lawgiver of Israel. Later the School of the Essenes was conducted chiefly for the purpose of interpreting the Pythagorean symbols. Pythagoras was initiated into Egyptian, Babylonian, and Chaldean Mysteries. Although it is believed by some that he was a disciple of Zoroaster, it is doubtful whether his instructor of that name was the God-man now revered by the Parsees. While accounts of his travels differ, historians agree that he visited many countries and studied at the feet of many masters.

"After having acquired all which it was possible for him to learn of the Greek philosophers and, presumably, become an initiate in the Eleusinian mysteries, he went to Egypt, and after many rebuffs and refusals, finally succeeded in securing initiation in the Mysteries of Isis, at the hands of the priests of Thebes. Then this intrepid 'joiner' wended his way into Phœnicia and Syria where the Mysteries of Adonis were conferred upon him, and crossing to the valley of the Euphrates he tarried long enough to become versed in the secret lore of the Chaldeans, who still dwelt in the vicinity of Babylon. Finally, he made his greatest and most historic venture through Media and Persia into Hindustan where he remained several years as a pupil and initiate of the learned Brahmins of Elephanta and Ellora." (See *Ancient Freemasonry,* by Frank C. Higgins, 32°.) The same author adds that the name of Pythagoras is still preserved in the records of the Brahmins as *Yavancharya,* the Ionian Teacher.

Pythagoras was said to have been the first man to call himself a *philosopher;* in fact, the world is indebted to him for the word *philosopher.* Before that time the wise men had called themselves *sages,* which was interpreted to mean *those who know.* Pythagoras was more modest. He coined the word *philosopher,* which

he defined as *one who is attempting to find out.*

After returning from his wanderings, Pythagoras established a school, or as it has been sometimes called, a university, at Crotona, a Dorian colony in Southern Italy. Upon his arrival at Crotona he was regarded askance, but after a short time those holding important positions in the surrounding colonies sought his counsel in matters of great moment. He gathered around him a small group of sincere disciples whom he instructed in the secret wisdom which had been revealed to him, and also in the fundamentals of occult mathematics, music, and astronomy, which he considered to be the triangular foundation of all the arts and sciences.

When he was about sixty years old, Pythagoras married one of his disciples, and seven children resulted from the union. His wife was a remarkably able woman, who not only inspired him during the years of his life but after his assassination continued to promulgate his doctrines.

As is so often the case with genius, Pythagoras by his outspokenness incurred both political and personal enmity. Among those who came for initiation was one who, because Pythagoras refused to admit him, determined to destroy both the man and his philosophy. By means of false propaganda, this disgruntled one turned the minds of the common people against the philosopher. Without warning, a band of murderers descended upon the little group of buildings where the great teacher and his disciples dwelt, burned the structures and killed Pythagoras.

Accounts of the philosopher’s death do not agree. Some say that he was murdered with his disciples; others that, on escaping from Crotona with a small band of followers, he was trapped and burned alive by his enemies in a little house where the band had decided to rest for the night. Another account states that, finding themselves trapped in the burning structure, the disciples threw themselves into the flames, making of their own bodies a bridge over which Pythagoras escaped, only to die of a broken heart a short time afterwards as the result of grieving over the apparent fruitlessness of his efforts to serve and illuminate mankind.

His surviving disciples attempted to perpetuate his doctrines, but they were persecuted on every hand and very little remains today as a testimonial to the greatness of this philosopher. It is said that the disciples of Pythagoras never addressed him or referred to him by his own name, but always as *The Master* or *That Man.* This may have been because of the fact that the name Pythagoras was believed to consist of a certain number of specially arranged letters with great

sacred significance. *The Word* magazine has printed an article by T. R. Prater, showing that Pythagoras initiated his candidates by means of a certain formula concealed within the letters of his own name. This may explain why the word Pythagoras was so highly revered.

After the death of Pythagoras his school gradually disintegrated, but those who had benefited by its teachings revered the memory of the great philosopher, as during his life they had reverenced the man himself. As time went on, Pythagoras came to be regarded as a god rather than a man, and his scattered disciples were bound together by their common admiration for the transcendent genius of their teacher. Edouard Schure, in his *Pythagoras and the Delphic Mysteries*, relates the following incident as illustrative of the bond of fellowship uniting the members of the Pythagorean School:

"One of them who had fallen upon sickness and poverty was kindly taken in by an innkeeper. Before dying he traced a few mysterious signs (the pentagram, no doubt) on the door of the inn and said to the host, 'Do not be uneasy, one of my brothers will pay my debts.' A year afterwards, as a stranger was passing by this inn he saw the signs and said to the host, 'I am a Pythagorean; one of my brothers died here; tell me what I owe you on his account."'

Frank C. Higgins, 32°, gives an excellent compendium of the Pythagorean tenets in the following outline:

"Pythagoras' teachings are of the most transcendental importance to Masons, inasmuch as they are the necessary fruit of his contact with the leading philosophers of the whole civilized world of his own day, and must represent that in which all were agreed, shorn of all weeds of controversy. Thus, the determined stand made by Pythagoras, in defense of pure monotheism, is sufficient evidence that the tradition to the effect that the unity of God was the supreme secret of all the ancient initiations is substantially correct. The philosophical school of Pythagoras was, in a measure, also a series of initiations, for he caused his pupils to pass through a series of degrees and never permitted them personal contact with himself until they had reached the higher grades. According to his biographers, his degrees were three in number. The first, that of 'Mathematicus,' assuring his pupils proficiency in mathematics and geometry, which was then, as it would be now if Masonry were properly inculcated, the basis upon which all other knowledge was erected. Secondly, the degree of 'Theoreticus,' which dealt with superficial applications of the exact sciences, and, lastly, the degree of 'Electus,' which entitled the candidate to pass forward into the light of the fullest illumination which he was capable of absorbing. The

pupils of the Pythagorean school were divided into ‘exoterici,’ or pupils in the outer grades, and ‘esoterici,’ after they had passed the third degree of initiation and were entitled to the secret wisdom. Silence, secrecy and unconditional obedience were cardinal principles of this great order.” (See *Ancient Freemasonry*.)

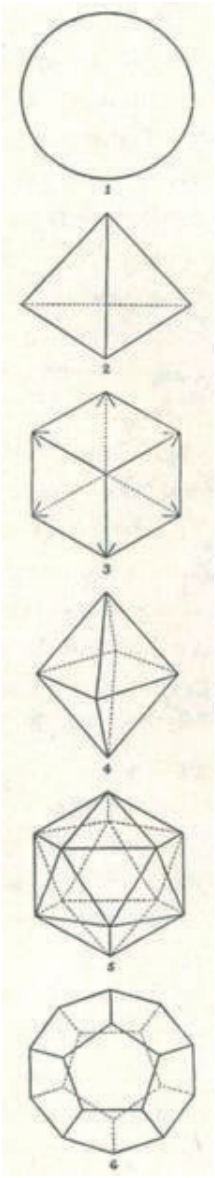
Pythagoric Fundamentals

The study of geometry, music, and astronomy was considered essential to a rational understanding of God, man, or Nature, and no one could accompany Pythagoras as a disciple who was not thoroughly familiar with these sciences. Many came seeking admission to his school. Each applicant was tested on these three subjects, and if found ignorant, was summarily dismissed.

Pythagoras was not an extremist. He taught moderation in all things rather than excess in anything, for he believed that an excess of virtue was in itself a vice. One of his favorite statements was: “We must avoid with our utmost endeavor, and amputate with fire and sword, and by all other means, from the body, sickness; from the soul, ignorance; from the belly, luxury; from a city, sedition; from a family, discord; and from all things, excess.” Pythagoras also believed that there was no crime equal to that of anarchy.

All men know what they *want*, but few know what they *need.* Pythagoras warned his disciples that when they prayed they should not pray for themselves; that when they asked things of the gods they should not ask things for themselves, because no man knows what is good for him and it is for this reason undesirable to ask for things which, if obtained, would only prove to be injurious.

The God of Pythagoras was the *Monad,* or the One that is Everything. He described God as the Supreme Mind distributed throughout all parts of the universe—the Cause of all things, the Intelligence of all things, and the Power within all things. He further declared the motion of God to be circular, the body of God to be composed of the substance of light, and the nature of God to be composed of the substance of truth.



THE SYMMETRICAL GEOMETRIC SOLIDS.

To the five symmetrical solids of the ancients is added the sphere (1), the most perfect of all created forms. The five Pythagorean solids are: the tetrahedron (2) with four equilateral triangles as faces; the cube (3) with six squares as faces; the octahedron (4) with eight equilateral triangles as faces; the icosahedron (5) with twenty equilateral triangles as faces; and the dodecahedron (6) with twelve regular pentagons as faces.

Pythagoras declared that the eating of meat clouded the reasoning faculties. While he did not condemn its use or totally abstain therefrom himself, he declared that judges should refrain from eating meat before a trial, in order that those who appeared before them might receive the most honest and astute decisions. When Pythagoras decided (as he often did) to retire into the temple of God for an extended period of time to meditate and pray, he took with him a supply of specially prepared food and drink. The food consisted of equal parts of the seeds of poppy and sesame, the skin of the sea onion from which the juice had been thoroughly extracted, the flower of daffodil, the leaves of mallows, and a paste of barley and peas. These he compounded together with the addition of wild honey. For a beverage he took the seeds of cucumbers, dried raisins (with seeds removed), the flowers of coriander, the seeds of mallows and purslane, scraped cheese, meal, and cream, mixed together and sweetened with wild honey. Pythagoras claimed that this was the diet of Hercules while wandering in the Libyan desert and was according to the formula given to that hero by the goddess Ceres herself.

The favorite method of healing among the Pythagoreans was by the aid of poultices. These people also knew the magic properties of vast numbers of plants. Pythagoras highly esteemed the medicinal properties of the sea onion, and he is said to have written an entire volume on the subject. Such a work, however, is not known at the present time. Pythagoras discovered that music had great therapeutic power and he prepared special harmonies for various diseases. He apparently experimented also with color, attaining considerable success. One of his unique curative processes resulted from his discovery of the healing value of certain verses from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* of Homer. These he caused to be read to persons suffering from certain ailments. He was opposed to surgery in all its forms and also objected to cauterizing. He would not permit the disfigurement of the human body, for such, in his estimation, was a sacrilege against the dwelling place of the gods.

Pythagoras taught that friendship was the truest and nearest perfect of all relationships. He declared that in Nature there was a friendship of all for all; of gods for men; of doctrines one for another; of the soul for the body; of the rational part for the irrational part; of philosophy for its theory; of men for one another; of countrymen for one another; that friendship also existed between strangers, between a man and his wife, his children, and his servants. All bonds without friendship were shackles, and there was no virtue in their maintenance. Pythagoras believed that relationships were essentially mental rather than physical, and that a stranger of sympathetic intellect was closer to him than a

blood relation whose viewpoint was at variance with his own. Pythagoras defined knowledge as the fruitage of mental accumulation. He believed that it would be obtained in many ways, but principally through observation. Wisdom was the understanding of the source or cause of all things, and this could be secured only by raising the intellect to a point where it intuitively cognized the invisible manifesting outwardly through the visible, and thus became capable of bringing itself *en rapport* with the spirit of things rather than with their forms. The ultimate source that wisdom could cognize was the *Monad,* the mysterious permanent atom of the Pythagoreans.

Pythagoras taught that both man and the universe were made in the image of God; that both being made in the same image, the understanding of one predicated the knowledge of the other. He further taught that there was a constant interplay between the Grand Man (the universe) and man (the little universe).

Pythagoras believed that all the sidereal bodies were alive and that the forms of the planets and stars were merely bodies encasing souls, minds, and spirits in the same manner that the visible human form is but the encasing vehicle for an invisible spiritual organism which is, in reality, the conscious individual. Pythagoras regarded the planets as magnificent deities, worthy of the adoration and respect of man. All these deities, however, he considered subservient to the One First Cause within whom they all existed temporarily, as mortality exists in the midst of immortality.

The famous Pythagorean Y signified the power of choice and was used in the Mysteries as emblematic of the Forking of the Ways. The central stem separated into two parts, one branching to the right and the other to the left. The branch to the right was called *Divine Wisdom* and the one to the left *Earthly Wisdom.* Youth, personified by the candidate, walking the Path of Life, symbolized by the central stem of the Y, reaches the point where the Path divides. The neophyte must then choose whether he will take the left-hand path and, following the dictates of his lower nature, enter upon a span of folly and thoughtlessness which will inevitably result in his undoing, or whether he will take the right-hand road and through integrity, industry, and sincerity ultimately regain union with the immortals in the superior spheres.

It is probable that Pythagoras obtained his concept of the Y from the Egyptians, who included in certain of their initiatory rituals a scene in which the candidate was confronted by two female figures. One of them, veiled with the white robes of the temple, urged the neophyte to enter into the halls of learning;

the other, bedecked with jewels, symbolizing earthly treasures, and bearing in her hands a tray loaded with grapes (emblematic of false light), sought to lure him into the chambers of dissipation. This symbol is still preserved among the Tarot cards, where it is called The Forking of the Ways. The forked stick has been the symbol of life among many nations, and it was placed in the desert to indicate the presence of water.

Concerning the theory of transmigration as disseminated by Pythagoras, there are differences of opinion. According to one view, he taught that mortals who during their earthly existence had by their actions become like certain animals, returned to earth again in the form of the beasts which they had grown to resemble. Thus, a timid person would return in the form of a rabbit or a deer; a cruel person in the form of a wolf or other ferocious animal; and a cunning person in the guise of a fox. This concept, however, does not fit into the general Pythagorean scheme, and it is far more likely that it was given in an allegorical rather than a literal sense. It was intended to convey the idea that human beings become bestial when they allow themselves to be dominated by their own lower desires and destructive tendencies. It is probable that the term *transmigration* is to be understood as what is more commonly called *reincarnation,* a doctrine which Pythagoras must have contacted directly or indirectly in India and Egypt.

The fact that Pythagoras accepted the theory of successive reappearances of the spiritual nature in human form is found in a footnote to Levi's *History of Magic:* "He was an important champion of what used to be called the doctrine of metempsychosis, understood as the soul's transmigration into successive bodies. He himself had been (a) Aethalides, a son of Mercury; (b) Euphorbus, son of Panthus, who perished at the hands of Menelaus in the Trojan war; (c) Hermotimus, a prophet of Clazomenae, a city of Ionia; (d) a humble fisherman; and finally (e) the philosopher of Samos."

Pythagoras also taught that each species of creatures had what he termed a seal, given to it by God, and that the physical form of each was the impression of this seal upon the wax of physical substance. Thus each body was stamped with the dignity of its divinely given pattern. Pythagoras believed that ultimately man would reach a state where he would cast off his gross nature and function in a body of spiritualized ether which would be in juxtaposition to his physical form at all times and which might be the eighth sphere, or Antichthon. From this he would ascend into the realm of the immortals, where by divine birthright he belonged.

Pythagoras taught that everything in nature was divisible into three parts and

that no one could become truly wise who did not view every problem as being diagrammatically triangular. He said, “Establish the triangle and the problem is two-thirds solved”; further, “All things consist of three.” In conformity with this viewpoint, Pythagoras divided the universe into three parts, which he called the *Supreme World,* the *Superior World,* and the *Inferior World.* The highest, or Supreme World, was a subtle, interpenetrative spiritual essence pervading all things and therefore the true plane of the Supreme Deity itself, the Deity being in every sense omnipresent, omniactive, omnipotent, and omniscient. Both of the lower worlds existed within the nature of this supreme sphere.

The Superior World was the home of the immortals. It was also the dwelling place of the archetypes, or the seals; their natures in no manner partook of the material of earthiness, but they, casting their shadows upon the deep (the Inferior World), were cognizable only through their shadows. The third, or Inferior World, was the home of those creatures who partook of material substance or were engaged in labor with or upon material substance. Hence, this sphere was the home of the mortal gods, the Demiurgi, the angels who labor with men; also the dæmons who partake of the nature of the earth; and finally mankind and the lower kingdoms, those temporarily of the earth but capable of rising above that sphere by reason and philosophy.

The digits 1 and 2 are not considered numbers by the Pythagoreans, because they typify the two supermundane spheres. The Pythagorean numbers, therefore, begin with 3, the triangle, and 4, the square. These added to the 1 and the 2, produce the 10, the great number of all things, the archetype of the universe. The three worlds were called *receptacles.* The first was the receptacle of principles, the second was the receptacle of intelligences, and the third, or lowest, was the receptacle of quantities.

“The symmetrical solids were regarded by Pythagoras, and by the Greek thinkers after him, as of the greatest importance. To be perfectly symmetrical or regular, a solid must have an equal number of faces meeting at each of its angles, and these faces must be equal regular polygons, i. e., figures whose sides and angles are all equal. Pythagoras, perhaps, may be credited with the great discovery that there are only five such solids. *

“Now, the Greeks believed the world [material universe] to be composed of four elements—earth, air, fire, water—and to the Greek mind the conclusion was inevitable that the shapes of the particles of the elements were those of the regular solids. Earth-particles were cubical, the cube being the regular solid possessed of greatest stability; fire-particles were tetrahedral, the tetrahedron

being the simplest and, hence, lightest solid. Water-particles were icosahedral for exactly the reverse reason, wilst air-particles, as intermediate between the two latter, were octahedral. The dodecahedron was, to these ancient mathematicians, the most mysterious of the solids; it was by far the most difficult to construct, the accurate drawing of the regular pentagon necessitating a rather elaborate application of Pythagoras' great theorem. Hence the conclusion, as Plato put it, that 'this (the regular dodecahedron) the Deity employed in tracing the plan of the Universe.'" (H. Stanley Redgrove, in *Bygone Beliefs*.)

Mr. Redgrove has not mentioned the fifth element of the ancient Mysteries, that which would make the analogy between the symmetrical solids and the elements complete. This fifth element, or ether, was called by the Hindus *akasa*. It was closely correlated with the hypothetical ether of modern science, and was the interpenetrative substance permeating all of the other elements and acting as a common solvent and common denominator of them. The twelve-faced solid also subtly referred to the Twelve Immortals who surfaced the universe, and also to the twelve convolutions of the human brain—the vehicles of those Immortals in the nature of man.

While Pythagoras, in accordance with others of his day, practiced divination (possibly arithmomancy), there is no accurate information concerning the methods which he used. He is believed to have had a remarkable wheel by means of which he could predict future events, and to have learned hydromancy from the Egyptians. He believed that brass had oracular powers, because even when everything was perfectly still there was always a rumbling sound in brass bowls. He once addressed a prayer to the spirit of a river and out of the water arose a voice, "Pythagoras, I greet thee." It is claimed for him that he was able to cause daemons to enter into water and disturb its surface, and by means of the agitations certain things were predicted.

After having drunk from a certain spring one day, one of the Masters of Pythagoras announced that the spirit of the water had just predicted that a great earthquake would occur the next day—a prophecy which was fulfilled. It is highly probable that Pythagoras possessed hypnotic power, not only over man but also over animals. He caused a bird to change the course of its flight, a bear to cease its ravages upon a community, and a bull to change its diet, by the exercise of mental influence. He was also gifted with second sight, being able to see things at a distance and accurately describe incidents that had not yet come to pass.

The Symbolic Aphorisms of Pythagoras

Iamblichus gathered thirty-nine of the symbolic sayings of Pythagoras and interpreted them. These have been translated from the Greek by Thomas Taylor. Aphorismic statement was one of the favorite methods of instruction used in the Pythagorean university of Crotona. Ten of the most representative of these aphorisms are reproduced below with a brief elucidation of their concealed meanings.

I. *Declining from the public ways, walk in unfrequented paths.* By this it is to be understood that those who desire wisdom must seek it in solitude.

II. *Govern your tongue before all other things, following the gods.* This aphorism warns man that his words, instead of representing him, misrepresent him, and that when in doubt as to what he should say, he should always be silent.

III. *The wind blowing, adore the sound.* Pythagoras here reminds his disciples that the fiat of God is heard in the voice of the elements, and that all things in Nature manifest through harmony, rhythm, order, or procedure the attributes of the Deity.

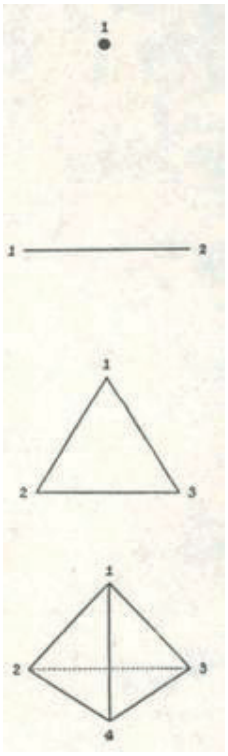
IV. *Assist a man in raising a burden; but do not assist him in laying it down.* The student is instructed to aid the diligent but never to assist those who seek to evade their responsibilities, for it is a great sin to encourage indolence.

V. *Speak not about Pythagoric concerns without light.* The world is herein warned that it should not attempt to interpret the mysteries of God and the states of the sciences without spiritual and intellectual illumination.

VI. *Having departed from your house, turn not back; for the furies will be your attendants.* Pythagoras here warns his followers that any who begin the search for truth and, after having learned part of the mystery, become discouraged and attempt to return again to their former ways of vice and ignorance, will suffer exceedingly; for it is better to know nothing about

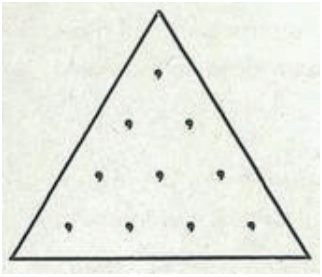
Divinity than to learn a little and then stop without learning all.

VII. *Nourish a cock, but sacrifice it not; for it is sacred to the sun and moon.* Two great lessons are concealed in this aphorism. The first is a warning against the sacrifice of living things to the gods, because life is sacred and man should not destroy it even as an offering to the Deity. The second warns man that the human body here referred to as a cock is sacred to the sun (God) and the moon (Nature), and should be guarded and preserved as man's most precious medium of expression. Pythagoras also warned his disciples against suicide.



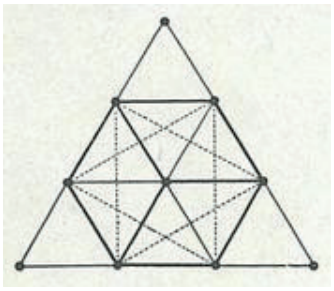
NUMBER RELATED TO FORM.

Pythagoras taught that the dot symbolized the power of the number 1, the line the power of the number 2, the surface the power of the number 3, and the solid the power of the number 4.



THE TETRACTYS.

Theon of Smyrna declares that the ten dots, or tetractys of Pythagoras, was a symbol of the greatest importance, for to the discerning mind it revealed the mystery of universal nature. The Pythagoreans bound themselves by the following oath: “By Him who gave to our soul the tetractys, which hath the fountain and root of ever-springing nature.”



THE CUBE AND THE STAR.

By connecting the ten dots of the tetractys, nine triangles are formed. Six of these are involved in the forming of the cube. The same triangles, when lines are properly drawn between them, also reveal the six-pointed star with a dot in the center. Only seven dots are used in forming the cube and the star. Qabbalistically, the three unused corner dots represent the threefold, invisible causal universe, while the seven dots involved in the cube and the star are the Elohim—the Spirits of the seven creative periods. The Sabbath, or seventh day, is the central dot.

VIII. *Receive not a swallow into your house.* This warns the seeker after truth not to allow drifting thoughts to come into his mind nor shiftless persons to enter into his life. He must ever surround himself with rationally inspired thinkers and with conscientious workers.

IX. *Offer not your right hand easily to anyone.* This warns the disciple to keep his own counsel and not offer wisdom and knowledge (his right hand) to such as are incapable of appreciating them. The hand here represents Truth, which *raises* those who have fallen because of ignorance; but as many of the unregenerate do not desire wisdom they will cut off the hand that is extended in kindness to them. Time alone can effect the redemption of the ignorant masses.

X. *When rising from the bedclothes, roll them together, and obliterate the impression of the body.* Pythagoras directed his disciples who had awakened from the sleep of ignorance into the waking state of intelligence to eliminate from their recollection all memory of their former spiritual darkness; for a wise man in passing leaves no form behind him which others less intelligent, seeing, shall use as a mold for the casting of idols.

The most famous of the Pythagorean fragments are the *Golden Verses,* ascribed to Pythagoras himself, but concerning whose authorship there is an element of doubt. The *Golden Verses* contain a brief summary of the entire system of philosophy forming the basis of the educational doctrines of Crotona, or, as it is more commonly known, the Italic School. These verses open by counseling the reader to love God, venerate the great heroes, and respect the dæmons and elemental inhabitants. They then urge man to think carefully and industriously concerning his daily life, and to prefer the treasures of the mind and soul to accumulations of earthly goods. The verses also promise man that if he will rise above his lower material nature and cultivate self-control, he will ultimately be acceptable in the sight of the gods, be reunited with them, and partake of their immortality. (It is rather significant to note that Plato paid a great price for some of the manuscripts of Pythagoras which had been saved from the destruction of Crotona. *See Historia Deorum Fatidicorum,* Geneva, 1675.)

Pythagorean Astronomy

According to Pythagoras, the position of each body in the universe was determined by the essential dignity of that body. The popular concept of his day was that the earth occupied the center of the solar system; that the planets, including the sun and moon, moved about the earth; and that the earth itself was flat and square. Contrary to this concept, and regardless of criticism, Pythagoras declared that fire was the most important of all the elements; that the center was the most important part of every body; and that, just as Vesta's fire was in the midst of every home, so in the midst of the universe was a flaming sphere of celestial radiance. This central globe he called the *Tower of Jupiter,* the *Globe of Unity,* the *Grand Monad,* and the *Altar of Vesta.* As the sacred number 10 symbolized the sum of all parts and the completeness of all things, it was only natural for Pythagoras to divide the universe into ten spheres, symbolized by ten concentric circles. These circles began at the center with the globe of Divine Fire; then came the seven planets, the earth, and another mysterious planet, called *Antichthon,* which was never visible.

Opinions differ as to the nature of *Antichthon.* Clement of Alexandria believed that it represented the mass of the heavens; others held the opinion that it was the moon. More probably it was the mysterious *eighth sphere* of the ancients, the dark planet which moved in the same orbit as the earth but which was always concealed from the earth by the body of the sun, being in exact opposition to the earth at all times. Is this the mysterious Lilith concerning which astrologers have speculated so long?

Isaac Myer has stated: "The Pythagoreans held that each star was a world having its own atmosphere, with an immense extent surrounding it, of aether." (See *The Qabbalah.*) The disciples of Pythagoras also highly revered the planet Venus, because it was the only planet bright enough to cast a shadow. As the morning star, Venus is visible before sunrise, and as the evening star it shines forth immediately after sunset. Because of these qualities, a number of names have been given to it by the ancients. Being visible in the sky at sunset, it was called vesper, and as it arose before the sun, it was called *the false light, the star*

of the morning, or *Lucifer,* which means *the light-bearer.* Because of this relation to the sun, the planet was also referred to as Venus, Astarte, Aphrodite, Isis, and The Mother of the Gods. It is possible that at some seasons of the year in certain latitudes the fact that Venus was a crescent could be detected without the aid of a telescope. This would account for the crescent which is often seen in connection with the goddesses of antiquity, the stories of which do not agree with the phases of the moon. The accurate knowledge which Pythagoras possessed concerning astronomy he undoubtedly secured in the Egyptian temples, for their priests understood the true relationship of the heavenly bodies many thousands of years before that knowledge was revealed to the uninitiated world. The fact that the knowledge he acquired in the temples enabled him to make assertions requiring two thousand years to check proves why Plato and Aristotle so highly esteemed the profundity of the ancient Mysteries. In the midst of comparative scientific ignorance, and without the aid of any modern instruments, the priest-philosophers had discovered the true fundamentals of universal dynamics.

An interesting application of the Pythagorean doctrine of geometric solids as expounded by Plato is found in *The Canon.* “Nearly all the old philosophers,” says its anonymous author, “devised an harmonic theory with respect to the universe, and the practice continued till the old mode of philosophizing died out. Kepler (1596), in order to demonstrate the Platonic doctrine, that the universe was formed of the five regular solids, proposed the following rule. ‘The earth is a circle, the measurer of all. Round it describe a dodecahedron; the circle inclosing this will be Mars. Round Mars describe a tetrahedron; the sphere inclosing this will be Jupiter. Describe a cube round Jupiter; the sphere containing this will be Saturn. Now inscribe in the earth an icosahedron; the circle inscribed in it will be Venus. Inscribe an octahedron in Venus; the circle inscribed in it will be Mercury’ (*Mysterium Cosmographicum,* 1596). This rule cannot be taken seriously as a real statement of the proportions of the cosmos, for it bears no real resemblance to the ratios published by Copernicus in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Yet Kepler was very proud of his formula, and said he valued it more than the Electorate of Saxony. It was also approved by those two eminent authorities, Tycho and Galileo, who evidently understood it. Kepler himself never gives the least hint of how his precious rule is to be interpreted.” Platonic astronomy was not concerned with the material constitution or arrangement of the heavenly bodies, but considered the stars and planets primarily as focal points of Divine intelligence. Physical astronomy was regarded as the science of “shadows,” philosophical astronomy the science of “realities.”

XIV

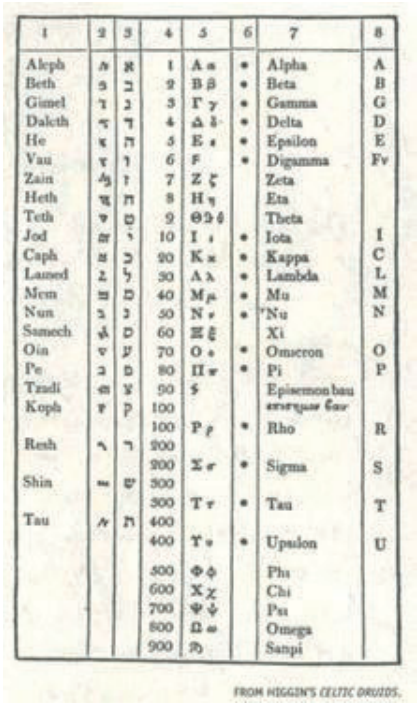
Pythagorean Mathematics

Concerning the secret significance of numbers there has been much speculation. Though many interesting discoveries have been made, it may be safely said that with the death of Pythagoras the great key to this science was lost. For nearly 2500 years philosophers of all nations have attempted to unravel the Pythagorean skein, but apparently none has been successful. Notwithstanding attempts made to obliterate all records of the teachings of Pythagoras, fragments have survived which give clues to some of the simpler parts of his philosophy. The major secrets were never committed to writing, but were communicated orally to a few chosen disciples. These apparently dared not divulge their secrets to the profane, the result being that when death sealed their lips the arcana died with them.

Certain of the secret schools in the world today are perpetuations of the ancient Mysteries, and although it is quite possible that they may possess some of the original numerical formulae, there is no evidence of it in the voluminous writings which have issued from these groups during the last five hundred years. These writings, while frequently discussing Pythagoras, show no indication of a more complete knowledge of his intricate doctrines than the post-Pythagorean Greek speculators had, who talked much, wrote little, knew less, and concealed their ignorance under a series of mysterious hints and promises. Here and there among the literary products of early writers are found enigmatic statements which they made no effort to interpret. The following example is quoted from Plutarch: “The Pythagoreans indeed go farther than this, and honour even numbers and geometrical diagrams with the names and titles of the gods. Thus they call the equilateral triangle head-born Minerva and Tritogenia, because it may be equally divided by three perpendiculars drawn from each of the angles. So the unit they term Apollo, as to the number two they have affixed the name of strife and audaciousness, and to that of three, justice. For, as doing an injury is

an extreme on the one side, and suffering one is an extreme on the other, justice properly takes place in the middle between them. In like manner the number thirty-six, their Tetraktys, or sacred Quater-nion, being composed of the first four odd numbers added to the first four even ones, as is commonly reported, is looked upon by them as the most solemn oath they can take, and called Kosmos." *(Isis and Osiris*.) Earlier in the same work, Plutarch also notes: "For as the power of the triangle is expressive of the nature of Pluto, Bacchus, and Mars; and the properties of the square of Rhea, Venus, Ceres, Vesta, and Juno; of the Dodecahedron of Jupiter; so, as we are informed by Eudoxus, is the figure of fifty-six angles expressive of the nature of Typhon." Plutarch did not pretend to explain the inner significance of the symbols, but believed that the relationship which Pythagoras established between the geometrical solids and the gods was the result of images the great sage had seen in the Egyptian temples.

Albert Pike, the great Masonic symbolist, admitted that there were many points concerning which he could secure no reliable information. In his *Symbolism,* for the 32° and 33°, he wrote: "I do not understand why the 7 should be called Minerva, or the cube, Neptune." Further on he added: "Undoubtedly the names given by the Pythagoreans to the different numbers were themselves enigmatical and symbolic—and there is little doubt that in the time of Plutarch the meanings these names concealed were lost. Pythagoras had succeeded too well in concealing his symbols with a veil that was from the first impenetrable, without his oral explanation *."



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Aleph	א	א	1	A α	*	Alpha	A
Beth	ב	ב	2	B β	*	Beta	B
Gimel	ג	ג	3	Γ γ	*	Gamma	G
Daleth	ד	ד	4	Δ δ	*	Delta	D
He	ה	ה	5	E ε	*	Epsilon	E
Vau	ו	ו	6	F	*	Digamma	Fv
Zain	ז	ז	7	Z ζ		Zeta	
Heth	ח	ח	8	H η		Eta	
Teth	ט	ט	9	Θ ϑ ϕ		Theta	
Jod	י	י	10	I ι	*	Iota	I
Caph	כ	כ	20	K κ	*	Kappa	C
Lamed	ל	ל	30	Λ λ	*	Lambda	L
Mem	מ	ם	40	M μ	*	Mu	M
Nun	נ	ן	50	N ν	*	Nu	N
Samech	ס	ס	60	Ξ ξ		Xi	
Oin	ע	ע	70	O ο	*	Omicron	O
Pe	פ	ף	80	Π π	*	Pi	P
Tzadi	צ	ץ	90	ϟ		Episemon bau	
Koph	ק	ק	100				
			100	P ρ	*	Rho	R
Resh	ר	ר	200				
			200	Σ σ	*	Sigma	S
Shin	ש	ש	300				
			300	T τ	*	Tau	T
Tau	ת	ת	400				
			400	Υ υ	*	Upsilon	U
			500	Φ φ		Phi	
			600	Χ χ		Chi	
			700	Ψ ψ		Psi	
			800	Ω ω		Omega	
			900	ϡ		Sanpi	

FROM HIGGIN'S *CELTIC DRUIDS*.

THE NUMERICAL VALUES OF THE HEBREW, GREEK, AND SAMARITAN ALPHABETS.

Column

1. Names of the Hebrew letters.
2. Samaritan letters.
3. Hebrew and Chaldean letters.
4. Numerical equivalents of the letters.
5. Capital and small Greek letters.
6. The letters marked with asterisks are those brought to Greece from Phcenicia by Cadmus.
7. Names of the Greek letters.
8. Nearest English equivalents to the Hebrew, Greek, and Samaritan letters.

NOTE: When used at the end of a word, the Hebrew Tau has the numerical value of 400, *Caph* 500, Mem 600, *Nun* 700, Pe 800, *Tzadi* 900. A dotted Alpha and a dashed Aleph have a value of 1,000.

This uncertainty shared by all true students of the subject proves conclusively that it is unwise to make definite statements founded on the indefinite and fragmentary information available concerning the Pythagorean system of mathematical philosophy. The material which follows represents an effort to collect a few salient points from the scattered records preserved by disciples of Pythagoras and others who have since contacted his philosophy.

Method of Securing the Numerical Power of Words

The first step in obtaining the numerical value of a word is to resolve it back into its original tongue. Only words of Greek or Hebrew derivation can be successfully analyzed by this method, and *all words must be spelled in their most ancient and complete forms.* Old Testament words and names, therefore, must be translated back into the early Hebrew characters and New Testament words into the Greek. Two examples will help to clarify this principle.

The *Demiurgus* of the Jews is called in English *Jehovah,* but when seeking the numerical value of the name *Jehovah* it is necessary to resolve the name into its Hebrew letters. It becomes יהוה and is read from right to left. The Hebrew letters are: ה *He;* ו *Vau;* ה He; י *Yod;* and when reversed into the English order from left to right read: *Yod-He-Vau-He.* By consulting the foregoing table of letter values, it is found that the four characters of this sacred name have the following numerical significance: *Yod* equals 10. *He* equals 5, *Vau* equals 6, and the second *He* equals 5. Therefore, 10 + 5 + 6 + 5=26, a synonym of *Jehovah.* If the English letters were used, the answer obviously would not be correct.

The second example is the mysterious Gnostic pantheos *Abraxas.* For this name the Greek table is used. *Abraxas* in Greek is ’Αβραξας. A = 1, β = 2, p = 100, α = 1, ξ = 60, α = 1, ς = 200, the sum being 365, the number of days in the year. This number furnishes the key to the mystery of Abraxas, who is symbolic of the 365 *Æons,* or Spirits of the Days, gathered together in one composite personality. *Abraxas* is symbolic of five creatures, and as the circle of the year actually consists of 360 degrees, each of the emanating deities is one-fifth of this power, or 72, one of the most sacred numbers in the Old Testament of the Jews and in their Qabbalistic system. This same method is used in finding the numerical value of the names of the gods and goddesses of the Greeks and Jews.

All higher numbers can be reduced to one of the original ten numerals, and the 10 itself to 1. Therefore, all groups of numbers resulting from the translation of names of deities into their numerical equivalents have a basis in one of the first ten numbers. By this system, in which the digits are added together, 666

becomes 6 + 6 + 6 or 18, and this, in turn, becomes 1 + 8 or 9. According to Revelation, 144,000 are to be saved. This number becomes 1 + 4 + 4 + 0 + 0 + 0, which equals 9, thus proving that both the Beast of Babylon and the number of the saved refer to man himself, whose symbol is the number 9. This system can be used successfully with both Greek and Hebrew letter values.

The original Pythagorean system of numerical philosophy contains nothing to justify the practice now in vogue of changing the given name or surname in the hope of improving the temperament or financial condition by altering the name vibrations.

There is also a system of calculation in vogue for the English language, but its accuracy is a matter of legitimate dispute. It is comparatively modern and has no relationship either to the Hebrew Qabbalistic system or to the Greek procedure. The claim made by some that it is Pythagorean is not supported by any tangible evidence, and there are many reasons why such a contention is untenable. The fact that Pythagoras used 10 as the basis of calculation, while this system uses 9—an imperfect number—is in itself almost conclusive. Furthermore, the arrangement of the Greek and Hebrew letters does not agree closely enough with the English to permit the application of the number sequences of one language to the number sequences of the others. Further experimentation with the system may prove profitable, but it is without basis in antiquity. The arrangement of the letters and numbers is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

The letters under each of the numbers have the value of the figure at the top of the column. Thus, in the word *man, M* = 4, *A = 1, N* = 5 : a total of 10. The values of the numbers are practically the same as those given by the Pythagorean system.

An Introduction to the Pyhtagorean Theory of Numbers

(The following outline of Pythagorean mathematics is a paraphrase of the opening chapters of Thomas Taylor's *Theoretic Arithmetic,* the rarest and most important compilation of Pythagorean mathematical fragments extant.) The Pythagoreans declared arithmetic to be the mother of the mathematical sciences. This is proved by the fact that geometry, music, and astronomy are dependent upon it but it is not dependent upon them. Thus, geometry may be removed but arithmetic will remain; but if arithmetic be removed, geometry is eliminated. In the same manner music depends upon arithmetic, but the elimination of music affects arithmetic only by limiting one of its expressions. The Pythagoreans also demonstrated arithmetic to be prior to astronomy, for the latter is dependent upon both geometry and music. The size, form, and motion of the celestial bodies is determined by the use of geometry; their harmony and rhythm by the use of music. If astronomy be removed, neither geometry nor music is injured; but if geometry and music be eliminated, astronomy is destroyed. The priority of both geometry and music to astronomy is therefore established. Arithmetic, however, is prior to all; it is primary and fundamental.

Pythagoras instructed his disciples that the science of mathematics is divided into two major parts. The first is concerned with the *multitude,* or the constituent parts of a thing, and the second with the *magnitude,* or the relative size or density of a thing.

Magnitude is divided into two parts—magnitude which is stationary and magnitude which is movable, the stationary part having priority. *Multitude* is also divided into two parts, for it is related both to itself and to other things, the first relationship having priority. Pythagoras assigned the science of arithmetic to multitude related to itself, and the art of music to multitude related to other things. Geometry likewise was assigned to stationary magnitude, and spherics (used partly in the sense of astronomy) to movable magnitude. Both multitude and magnitude were circumscribed by the circumference of mind. The atomic theory has proved size to be the result of number, for a mass is made up of minute units though mistaken by the uninformed for a single simple substance.

Owing to the fragmentary condition of existing Pythagorean records, it is difficult to arrive at exact definitions of terms. Before it is possible, however, to unfold the subject further some light must be cast upon the meanings of the words *number, monad,* and *one.*

The *monad* signifies (a) the all-including ONE. The Pythagoreans called the monad the "noble number, Sire of Gods and men." The monad also signifies (b) the sum of any combination of numbers considered as a whole. Thus, the universe is considered as a monad, but the individual parts of the universe (such as the planets and elements) are monads in relation to the parts of which they themselves are composed, though they, in turn, are parts of the greater monad formed of their sum. The monad may also be likened (c) to the seed of a tree which, when it has grown, has many branches (the numbers). In other words, the numbers are to the monad what the branches of the tree are to the seed of the tree. From the study of the mysterious Pythagorean monad, Leibnitz evolved his magnificent theory of the world atoms—a theory in perfect accord with the ancient teachings of the Mysteries, for Leibnitz himself was an initiate of a secret school. By some Pythagoreans the monad is also considered (d) synonymous with the one.

Number is the term applied to all numerals and their combinations. (A strict interpretation of the term *number* by certain of the Pythagorean excludes 1 and 2.) Pythagoras defines number to be the extension and energy of the spermatic reasons contained in the monad. The followers of Hippasus declared number to be the first pattern used by the Demiurgus in the formation of the universe.

The one was defined by the Platonists as "the summit of the many." The one differs from the monad in that the term *monad* is used to designate the sum of the parts considered as a unit, whereas the *one* is the term applied to each of its integral parts.

There are two orders of number: *odd* and *even.* Because unity, or 1, always remains indivisible, the odd number cannot be divided equally. Thus, 9 is 4 + 1 + 4, the unity in the center being indivisible. Furthermore, if any odd number be divided into two parts, one part will always be odd and the other even. Thus, 9 may be 5 + 4, 3 + 6, 7 + 2, or 8 + 1. The Pythagoreans considered the odd number—of which the monad was the prototype—to be definite and masculine. They were not all agreed, however, as to the nature of unity, or 1. Some declared it to be positive, because if added to an even (negative) number, it produces an odd (positive) number. Others demonstrated that if unity be added to an odd number, the latter becomes even, thereby making the masculine to be feminine.

Unity, or 1, therefore, was considered an androgynous number, partaking of both the masculine and the feminine attributes; consequently both odd and even. For this reason the Pythagoreans called it *evenly-odd.* It was customary for the Pythagoreans to offer sacrifices of an uneven number of objects to the superior gods, while to the goddesses and subterranean spirits an even number was offered.

Any even number may be divided into two equal parts, which are always either both odd or both even. Thus, 10 by equal division gives 5 + 5, both odd numbers. The same principle holds true if the 10 be unequally divided. For example, in 6 + 4, both parts are even; in 7 + 3, both parts are odd; in 8 + 2, both parts are again even; and in 9 + 1, both parts are again odd. Thus, in the even number, however it may be divided, the parts will always be both odd or both even. The Pythagoreans considered the even number—of which the *duad* was the prototype—to be indefinite and feminine.

The odd numbers are divided by a mathematical contrivance—called "the Sieve of Eratosthenes"—into three general classes: *incomposite, composite,* and *incomposite-composite.*

The *incomposite* numbers are those which have no divisor other than themselves and unity, such as 3, 5, 7,11,13,17,19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41, 43, 47, and so forth. For example, 7 is divisible only by 7, which goes into itself once, and unity, which goes into 7 seven times.

The *composite* numbers are those which are divisible not only by themselves and unity but also by some other number, such as 9, 15, 21, 25, 27, 33, 39, 45, 51, 57, and so forth. For example, 21 is divisible not only by itself and by unity, but also by 3 and by 7.

The *incomposite-composite* numbers are those which have no common divisor, although each of itself is capable of division, such as 9 and 25. For example, 9 is divisible by 3 and 25 by 5, but neither is divisible by the divisor of the other; thus they have no common divisor. Because they have individual divisors, they are called *composite;* and because they have no common divisor, they are called *incomposite.* Accordingly, the term *incomposite-composite* was created to describe their properties.

Even numbers are divided into three classes: *evenly-even, evenly-odd,* and *oddly-odd.*

The *evenly-even* numbers are all in duple ratio from unity; thus: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, and 1,024. The proof of the perfect *evenly-even* number is

that it can be halved and the halves again halved back to unity, as ½ of 64=32; ½ of 32=16; ½ of 16=8; ½ of 8=4; ½ of 4=2; ½ of 2=1; beyond unity it is impossible to go.

The *evenly-even* numbers possess certain unique properties. The sum of any number of terms but the last term is always equal to the last term minus one. For example: the sum of the first and second terms (1 + 2) equals the third term (4) minus one; or, the sum of the first, second, third, and fourth terms (1 + 2 + 4+8) equals the fifth term (16) minus one.

In a series of *evenly-even* numbers, the first multiplied by the last equals the last; the second multiplied by the second from the last equals the last, and so on until in an odd series one number remains, which multiplied by itself equals the last number of the series; or, in an even series two numbers remain, which multiplied by each other give the last number of the series. For example: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16 is an odd series. The first number (1) multiplied by the last number (16) equals the last number (16). The second number (2) multiplied by the second from the last number (8) equals the last number (16). Being an odd series, the 4 is left in the center, and this multiplied by itself also equals the last number (16).

The *evenly-odd* numbers are those which, when halved, are incapable of further division by halving. They are formed by taking the odd numbers in sequential order and multiplying them by 2. By this process the odd numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 produce the evenly-odd numbers 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22. Thus, every fourth number is evenly-odd. Each of the even-odd numbers may be divided once, as 2, which becomes two 1’s and cannot be divided further; or 6, which becomes two 3’s and cannot be divided further.

Another peculiarity of the evenly-odd numbers is that if the divisor be odd the quotient is always even, and if the divisor be even the quotient is always odd. For example: if 18 be divided by 2 (an even divisor) the quotient is 9 (an odd number); if 18 be divided by 3 (an odd divisor) the quotient is 6 (an even number).

The evenly-odd numbers are also remarkable in that each term is one-half of the sum of the terms on either side of it. For example: 10 is one-half of the sum of 6 and 14; 18 is one-half the sum of 14 and 22; and 6 is one-half the sum of 2 and 10.

The oddly-odd, or unevenly-even, numbers are a compromise between the evenly-even and the evenly-odd numbers. Unlike the evenly-even, they cannot be halved back to unity; and unlike the evenly-odd, they are capable of more

than one division by halving. The oddly-odd numbers are formed by multiplying the evenly-even numbers above 2 by the odd numbers above one. The odd numbers above one are 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and so forth. The evenly-even numbers above 2 are 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 and so on. The first odd number of the series (3) multiplied by 4 (the first evenly-even number of the series) gives 12, the first oddly-odd number. By multiplying 5, 7, 9, 11, and so forth, by 4, oddly-odd numbers are found. The other oddly-odd numbers are produced by multiplying 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and so forth, in turn, by the other evenly-even numbers (8, 16, 32, 64, and so forth). An example of the halving of the oddly-odd number is as follows: ½ of 12 = 6; ½ of 6 = 3, which cannot be halved further because the Pythagoreans did not divide unity.

Even numbers are also divided into three other classes: *superperfect*, *deficient*, and *perfect*.

Superperfect or *superabundant* numbers are such as have the sum of their fractional parts greater than themselves. For example: ½ of 24 = 12; ¼ = 6; ⅛ = 8; 1/16 = 4; 1/32 = 2; and 1/64 = 1. The sum of these parts (12+6+8+4+2+1) is 33, which is in excess of 24, the original number.

Deficient numbers are such as have the sum of their fractional parts less than themselves. For example: ½ of 14=7; ⅐ = 2; and 1/14 = 1. The sum of these parts (7 + 2 + 1) is 10, which is less than 14, the original number.

Perfect numbers are such as have the sum of their fractional parts equal to themselves. For example: ½ of 28 = 14; ¼ = 7; ⅐ = 4; 1/14 = 2; and 1/28 = 1. The sum of these parts (14 + 7 + 4 + 2 + 1) is equal to 28.

The perfect numbers are extremely rare. There is only one between 1 and 10, namely, 6; one between 10 and 100, namely, 28; one between 100 and 1,000, namely, 496; and one between 1,000 and 10,000, namely, 8,128. The perfect numbers are found by the following rule: The first number of the evenly-even series of numbers (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, and so forth) is added to the second number of the series, and if an incomposite number results it is multiplied by the last number of the series of evenly-even numbers whose sum produced it. The product is the first perfect number. For example: the first and second evenly-even numbers are 1 and 2. Their sum is 3, an incomposite number. If 3 be multiplied by 2, the last number of the series of evenly-even numbers used to produce it, the product is 6, the first perfect number. If the addition of the evenly-even numbers does not result in an incomposite number, the next evenly-even number of the series must be added until an incomposite number results.

The second perfect number is found in the following manner: The sum of the evenly-even numbers 1, 2, and 4 is 7, an incomposite number. If 7 be multiplied by 4 (the last of the series of evenly-even numbers used to produce it) the product is 28, the second perfect number. This method of calculation may be continued to infinity.

Perfect numbers when multiplied by 2 produce superabundant numbers, and when divided by 2 produce deficient numbers.

The Pythagoreans evolved their philosophy from the science of numbers. The following quotation from *Theoretic Arithmetic* is an excellent example of this practice: “Perfect numbers, therefore, are beautiful images of the virtues which are certain media between excess and defect, and are not summits, as by some of the ancients they were supposed to be. And evil indeed is opposed to evil, but both are opposed to one good. Good, however, is never opposed to good, but to two evils at one and the same time. Thus timidity is opposed to audacity, to both [of] which the want of true courage is common; but both timidity and audacity are opposed to fortitude. Craft also is opposed to fatuity, to both [of] which the want of intellect is common; and both these are opposed to prudence. Thus, too, profusion is opposed to avarice, to both [of] which illiberality is common; and both these are opposed to liberality. And in a similar manner in the other virtues; by all [of] which it is evident that perfect numbers have a great similitude to the virtues. But they also resemble the virtues on another account; for they are rarely found, as being few, and they are generated in a very constant order. On the contrary, an infinite multitude of superabundant and diminished numbers may be found, nor are they disposed in any orderly series, nor generated from any certain end; and hence they have a great similitude to the vices, which are numerous, inordinate, and indefinite.”

The Table of the Ten Numbers

(The following outline of the Pythagorean numbers is a paraphrase of the writings of Nicomachus, Theon of Smyrna, Proclus, Porphyry, Plutarch, Clement of Alexandria, Aristotle, and other early authorities.)

Monad—1—is so called because it remains always in the same condition—that is, separate from multitude. Its attributes are as follows: It is called mind, because the mind is stable and has preeminence; hermaphrodism, because it is both male and female; odd and even, for being added to the even it makes odd, and to the odd, even; God, because it is the beginning and end of all, but itself has neither beginning nor end; good, for such is the nature of God; the receptacle of matter, because it produces the duad, which is essentially material.

By the Pythagoreans monad was called chaos, obscurity, chasm, Tartarus, Styx, abyss, Lethe, Atlas, Axis, Morpho (a name for Venus), and Tower or Throne of Jupiter, because of the great power which abides in the center of the universe and controls the circular motion of the planets about itself. Monad is also called germinal reason, because it is the origin of all the thoughts in the universe. Other names given to it were: Apollo, because of its relation to the sun; Prometheus, because he brought man light; Pyralios, one who exists in fire; geniture, because without it no number can exist; substance, because substance is primary; cause of truth; and constitution of symphony: all these because it is the primordial one.

Between greater and lesser the monad is equal; between intention and remission it is middle; in multitude it is mean; and in time it is now, because eternity knows neither past nor future. It is called Jupiter, because he is Father and head of the gods; Vesta, the fire of the home, because it is located in the midst of the universe and remains there inclining to no side as a dot in a circle; form, because it circumscribes, comprehends, and terminates; love, concord, and piety, because it is indivisible. Other symbolic names for the monad are ship, chariot, Proteus (a god capable of changing his form), Mnemosyne, and Polyonymous (having many names).

The following symbolic names were given to the duad—2—because it has been divided, and is two rather than one; and when there are two, each is opposed to the other: genius, evil, darkness, inequality, instability, movability, boldness, fortitude, contention, matter, dissimilarity, partition between multitude and monad, defect, shapelessness, indefiniteness, indeterminateness, harmony, tolerance, root, feet of fountain-abounding idea, top, Phanes, opinion, fallacy, alterity, diffidence, impulse, death, motion, generation, mutation, division, longitude, augmentation, composition, communion, misfortune, sustenta-tion, imposition, marriage, soul, and science.

In his book, *Numbers*, W. Wynn Westcott says of the duad: "It was called 'Audacity,' from its being the earliest number to separate itself from the Divine One; from the 'Adytum of God-nourished Silence,' as the Chaldean oracles say."

As the monad is the father, so the duad is the mother; therefore, the duad has certain points in common with the goddesses Isis, Rhea (Jove's mother), Phrygia, Lydia, Dindymene (Cybele), and Ceres; Erato (one of the Muses); Diana, because the moon is forked; Dictynna, Venus, Dione, Cytherea; Juno, because she is both wife and sister of Jupiter; and Maia, the mother of Mercury.

While the monad is the symbol of wisdom, the duad is the symbol of ignorance, for in it exists the sense of separateness—which sense is the beginning of ignorance. The duad, however, is also the mother of wisdom, for ignorance—out of the nature of itself—invariably gives birth to wisdom.

The Pythagoreans revered the monad but despised the duad, because it was the symbol of polarity. By the power of the duad the deep was created in contradistinction to the heavens. The deep mirrored the heavens and became the symbol of illusion, for the below was merely a reflection of the above. The below was called *maya,* the illusion, the sea, the Great Void, and to symbolize it the Magi of Persia carried mirrors. From the duad arose disputes and contentions, until by bringing the monad between the duad, equilibrium was reestablished by the Savior-God, who took upon Himself the form of a number and was crucified between two thieves for the sins of men.

The triad—3—is the first number actually odd (monad not always being considered a number). It is the first equilibrium of unities; therefore, Pythagoras said that Apollo gave oracles from a tripod, and advised offer of libation three times. The keywords to the qualities of the triad are friendship, peace, justice, prudence, piety, temperance, and virtue. The following deities partake of the principles of the triad: Saturn (ruler of time), Latona, Cornucopiæ, Ophion (the

great serpent), Thetis, Hecate, Polyhymnia (a Muse), Pluto, Triton, President of the Sea, Tritogenia, Achelous, and the Fates, Furies, and Graces. This number is called wisdom, because men organize the present, foresee the future, and benefit by the experiences of the past. It is cause of wisdom and understanding. The triad is the number of knowledge—music, geometry, and astronomy, and the science of the celestials and terrestrials. Pythagoras taught that the cube of this number had the power of the lunar circle.

The sacredness of the triad and its symbol—the triangle—is derived from the fact that it is made up of the monad and the duad. The monad is the symbol of the Divine Father and the duad of the Great Mother. The triad being made of these two is therefore androgynous and is symbolic of the fact that God gave birth to His worlds out of Himself, who in His creative aspect is always symbolized by the triangle. The monad passing into the duad was thus capable of becoming the parent of progeny, for the duad was the womb of Meru, within which the world was incubated and within which it still exists in embryo.

The tetrad—4—was esteemed by the Pythagoreans as the primogenial number, the root of all things, the fountain of Nature and the most perfect number. All tetrads are intellectual; they have an emergent order and encircle the world as the Empyreum passes through it. Why the Pythagoreans expressed God as a tetrad is explained in a sacred discourse ascribed to Pythagoras, wherein God is called the Number of Numbers. This is because the decad, or 10, is composed of 1, 2, 3, and 4. The number 4 is symbolic of God because it is symbolic of the first four numbers. Moreover, the tetrad is the center of the week, being halfway between 1 and 7. The tetrad is also the first geometric solid.

Pythagoras maintained that the soul of man consists of a tetrad, the four powers of the soul being mind, science, opinion, and sense. The tetrad connects all beings, elements, numbers, and seasons; nor can anything be named which does not depend upon the tetractys. It is the Cause and Maker of all things, the intelligible God, Author of celestial and sensible good. Plutarch interprets this tetractys, which he said was also called the world, to be 36, consisting of the first four odd numbers added to the first four even numbers, thus:

$$\begin{aligned} 1+3+5+7 &= 16 \\ 2+4+6+8 &= 20 \\ &\overline{\quad 36}\end{aligned}$$

Keywords given to the tetrad are impetuosity, strength, virility, two-mothered, and the key keeper of Nature, because the universal constitution cannot be without it. It is also called harmony and the first profundity. The following deities partook of the nature of the tetrad: Hercules, Mercury, Vulcan, Bacchus, and Urania (one of the Muses).

The triad represents the primary colors and the major planets, while the tetrad represents the secondary colors and the minor planets. From the first triangle come forth the seven spirits, symbolized by a triangle and a square. These together form the Masonic apron.

The pentad—5—is the union of an odd and an even number (3 and 2). Among the Greeks, the pentagram was a sacred symbol of light, health, and vitality. It also symbolized the fifth element—ether—because it is free from the disturbances of the four lower elements. It is called equilibrium, because it divides the perfect number 10 into two equal parts.

The pentad is symbolic of Nature, for, when multiplied by itself it returns into itself, just as grains of wheat, starting in the form of seed, pass through Nature's processes and reproduce the seed of the wheat as the ultimate form of their own growth. Other numbers multiplied by themselves produce other numbers, but only 5 and 6 multiplied by themselves represent and retain their original number as the last figure in their products.

The pentad represents all the superior and inferior beings. It is sometimes referred to as the hierophant, or the priest of the Mysteries, because of its connection with the spiritual ethers, by means of which mystic development is attained. Keywords of the pentad are reconciliation, alternation, marriage, immortality, cordiality, providence, and sound. Among the deities who partook of the nature of the pentad were Pallas, Nemesis, Bubastia (Bast), Venus, Androgynia, Cytherea, and the messengers of Jupiter.

The tetrad (the elements) plus the monad equals the pentad. The Pythagoreans taught that the elements of earth, fire, air, and water were permeated by a substance called ether—the basis of vitality and life. Therefore, they chose the five-pointed star, or pentagram, as the symbol of vitality, health, and interpenetration.

It was customary for the philosophers to conceal the element of earth under the symbol of a dragon, and many of the heroes of antiquity were told to go forth and slay the dragon. Hence, they drove their sword (the monad) into the body of the dragon (the tetrad). This resulted in the formation of the pentad, a symbol of

the victory of the spiritual nature over the material nature. The four elements are symbolized in the early Biblical writings as the four rivers that poured out of the Garden of Eden. The elements themselves are under the control of the composite Cherubim of Ezekiel.

The Pythagoreans held the hexad—6—to represent, as Clement of Alexandria conceived, the creation of the world according to both the prophets and the ancient Mysteries. It was called by the Pythagoreans the perfection of all the parts. This number was particularly sacred to Orpheus, and also to the Fate, Lachesis, and the Muse Thalia. It was called the form of forms, the articulation of the universe, and the maker of the soul.

Among the Greeks, harmony and the soul were considered to be similar in nature, because all souls are harmonic. The hexad is also the symbol of marriage, because it is formed by the union of two triangles, one masculine and the other feminine. Among the keywords given to the hexad are: time, for it is the measure of duration; panacea, because health is equilibrium, and the hexad is a balance number; the world, because the world, like the hexad, is often seen to consist of contraries by harmony; omnisufficient, because its parts are sufficient for totality (3 + 2 + 1 = 6); unwearied, because it contains the elements of immortality.

By the Pythagoreans the heptad—7—was called “worthy of veneration.” It was held to be the number of religion, because man is controlled by seven celestial spirits to whom it is proper for him to make offerings. It was called the number of life, because it was believed that human creatures born in the seventh month of embryonic life usually lived, but those born in the eighth month often died. One author called it the Motherless Virgin, Minerva, because it was not born of a mother but out of the crown, or the head of the Father, the monad. Keywords of the heptad are fortune, occasion, custody, control, government, judgment, dreams, voices, sounds, and that which leads all things to their end. Deities whose attributes were expressed by the heptad were Ægis, Osiris, Mars, and Cleo (one of the Muses).

Among many ancient nations the heptad is a sacred number. The Elohim of the Jews were supposedly seven in number. They were the Spirits of the Dawn, more commonly known as the Archangels controlling the planets. The seven Archangels, with the three spirits controlling the sun in its threefold aspect, constitute the 10, the sacred Pythagorean decad. The mysterious Pythagorean tetractys, or four rows of dots, increasing from 1 to 4, was symbolic of the stages of creation. The great Pythagorean truth that all things in Nature are regenerated through the decad, or 10, is subtly preserved in Freemasonry through the grips;

these grips being effected by the uniting of 10 fingers, five on the hand of each person.

The 3 (spirit, mind, and soul) descend into the 4 (the world), the sum being the 7, or the mystic nature of man, consisting of a threefold spiritual body and a fourfold material form. These are symbolized by the cube, which has six surfaces and a mysterious seventh point within. The six surfaces are the directions: north, east, south, west, up, and down; or, front, back, right, left, above, and below; or again, earth, fire, air, water, spirit, and matter. In the midst of these stands the 1, which is the upright figure of man, from whose center in the cube radiate six pyramids. From this comes the great occult axiom: “The center is the father of the directions, the dimensions, and the distances.”

The heptad is the number of the law, because it is the number of the Makers of Cosmic law, the Seven Spirits before the Throne.

The ogdoad—8—was sacred because it was the number of the first cube, which form had eight corners, and was the only evenly-even number under 10 (1-2-4-8-4-2-1). Thus, the 8 is divided into two 4’s, each 4 is divided into two 2’s, and each 2 is divided into two 1’s, thereby reestablishing the monad. Among the keywords of the ogdoad are love, counsel, prudence, law, and convenience. Among the divinities partaking of its nature were Panarmonia, Rhea, Cibele, Cadmæa, Dindymene, Orcia, Neptune, Themis, and Euterpe (a Muse).

The ogdoad was a mysterious number associated with the Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece and the Cabiri. It was called the little holy number. It derived its form partly from the twisted snakes on the Caduceus of Hermes and partly from the serpentine motion of the celestial bodies; possibly also from the moon’s nodes.

The ennead—9—was the first square of an odd number (3 X 3). It was associated with failure and shortcoming, because it fell short of the perfect number 10 by one. It was called the number of man, because of the nine months of his embryonic life. Among its keywords are ocean and horizon, because to the ancients these were boundless. The ennead is the limitless number because there is nothing beyond it but the infinite 10. It was called boundary and limitation, because it gathered all numbers within itself. It was called the sphere of the air, because it surrounded the numbers as air surrounds the earth. Among the gods and goddesses who partook in greater or less degree of its nature were Prometheus, Vulcan, Juno, the sister and wife of Jupiter, Pæan, and Aglaia, Tritogenia, Curetes, Proserpine, Hyperion, and Terpsichore (a Muse).